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Crash course

TO THE EDITORS:

Dani Rodrik presents a false dichotomy when he characterizes the choices available for countries like Argentina as either surrendering their sovereignty to the U.S. economy or reasserting their sovereignty with a vengeance and thereby exposing investors to sovereign risk ("Trade Rout," January 14). The underlying problem in Argentina is not that "democratic politics casts a long shadow on international capital flows," but that provincial party and union bosses have an iron grip on democracy itself. In order to ensure that globalization's benefits and costs alike are shared equitably, it is necessary that Argentina's presidential democracy be based on a give-and-take between a president and an independent congress that are both seeking to implement policies favored by the average citizen.

Yet Argentina's congress is not independent and is thus incapable of representing broad interests. Instead it is thoroughly under the thumb of the governors and other provincial bosses who simply want to channel central revenues into their own pockets and those of their cronies. Unions are not broadly representative but rather are run for the benefit of a narrow labor aristocracy and remain the biggest constituency of the dominant Peronist party that created them decades ago. The real lesson from Argentina's crash is that a liberalized economy is incompatible with the unreconstructed political legacies of the inward-looking past.

MATTHEW SHUGART
Professor of Political Science
Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies
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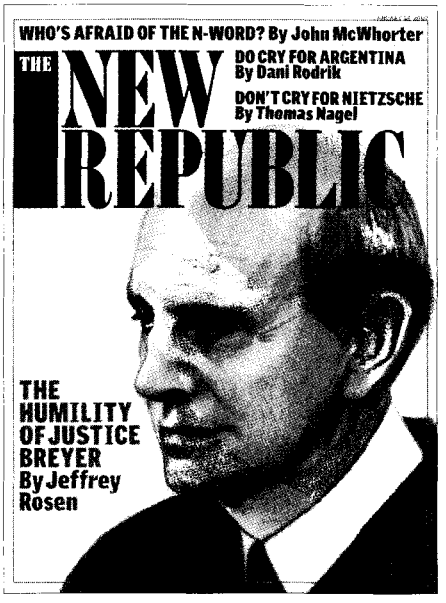
Storied past

TO THE EDITORS:

In Franklin Foer's article on Reza Pahlavi, there are certain references to me that I would like to clarify ("Successor Story," January 14). The article stated that Pahlavi recruited me "to tend his $25 million inheritance." This figure is wrong. The amount of inheritance that Pahlavi had while we were working together was not $25 million, and I was not entrusted with all of his inheritance. The article continues, "[m]illions were shuffled into the accounts of Ansari's friends and family." This statement is deceitful. First of all, I am related to Pahlavi, and we have many common family and friends. Money distributed from his funds was based solely


WHO'S AFRAID OF THE N-WORD? By John McWhorter
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DON'T CRY FOR NIETZSCHE By Thomas Nagel
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on his instructions—for example, when he asked me to send money to his grandmother, who was also my grandaunt. By March 1989 Pahlavi's cash was totally spent by himself. He was constantly asking me to support him until summer, by which time he said that he would be entitled to a $200 million disbursement from his trust, which would settle everything.

The manner in which Foer described the safe-deposit box incident implied that Pahlavi did not find what he was looking for when he opened the box. However, his deposition given on September 14, 1994, in Alexandria, Virginia, proved otherwise. In answering the question by Thomas P. Gorman, Esq., in relation to the content of the safe-deposit box, Pahlavi answered: "At a glance it appeared what Ansari claimed were the contents of the box were actually one and the same. Don't get something wrong here. As a matter of fact, what Ansari told me should be in there appeared to be in there." With accordance to Pahlavi, once he was told by the bank that his access to the box was in question—although I personally gave Pahlavi the key to that safe-deposit box, and left the bank instructions to give him access in the first place—instead of calling me to clarify the situation, he decided to take legal action against me. Is this the action of a rational man?

You have referred to my book as a "kiss-and-tell memoir." First of all, I would like to remind you that Pahlavi initiated this dispute. Pahlavi had spent enormous sums in the U.S. courts attacking me in an effort to destroy my reputation. Pahlavi had not stopped at any injustice against me and my family, including pressing the courts to auction my house, which was the only place my family and I had in which to live. I do not have the money to litigate in U.S. courts. The only way open to me to respond to the false allegations that were being spread about me was through the publication of my books.

AHMAD ALI MASSOUD ANSARI
Great Falls, Virginia

FRANKLIN FOER REPLIES:

In his letter, Ahmad Ali Massoud Ansari says that Reza Pahlavi's fortune wasn't $25 million and that he wasn't entrusted with all of it. Ansari doesn't explain why the number is wrong, but in the past he has said the reason is that Pahlavi stands to inherit millions more if he retakes the throne. But, needless to say, when Pahlavi was in exile he had access to only the $25 million Ansari helped squander. Then Ansari presents his version of the Geneva bank incident. To make his case, he quotes Pahlavi as saying that he found exactly the contents in the safe-deposit box that Ansari had described. But this doesn't contradict my piece. I wrote that Pahlavi found nothing in the box; I didn't say that Ansari hadn't warned him he'd find nothing. When Pahlavi accused Ansari of mishandling his fortune, he took Ansari to court. The court ordered Ansari to account for Pahlavi's finances. Ansari didn't respond (and was therefore forced to pay Pahlavi $9 million). Given Ansari's response to THE NEW REPUBLIC, it's no wonder he didn't.

TO THE EDITORS:

As an Iranian-American, I find that Franklin Foer has great insight into what is happening inside Iran as well as what Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi faces in his struggle to bring democracy to Iran. We know that the majority of Iran's population—the young and the women—are fed up with the fundamentalist autocratic regime and that the older generations are disillusioned. They are ready and willing for change and look to Pahlavi as their savior. He in turn has taken his inherited responsibility to lead the way to democracy, which in turn will bring Iran stability in a volatile region and enable Iran to regain its status in the world community and be an ally to the West in the war on terror. Pahlavi has lived with democracy for more than 20 years. I believe that he would be true to his word: His goal is to bring a free and multiparty referendum to Iran and let the people decide their fate.

SHAHLA SAMII
New York, New York

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

War Paths

MORALLY, PRESIDENT Bush's State of the Union address was compelling. Intellectually, it was incoherent. And unless that changes, all the tough talk will end in tears.

The press generally interpreted the speech as an effort to extend the war on terrorism to include Iran, North Korea, and above all Iraq. And that's just the way the administration wanted it to be interpreted. Over and over, the president implied that Tehran, Pyongyang, and Baghdad represent the natural next step in America's anti-terrorism struggle. Bush referred to "states like these, and their terrorist allies." He spoke of "terrorists and their state sponsors" and vowed not to leave "terror states unchecked." But who exactly are North Korea's "terrorist allies"? According to the State Department's most recent "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report, North Korea's primary link to terrorism is its refusal to hand over some Japanese Communists who hijacked an airliner in 1970. Even Iraq, according to the report, "has not attempted an anti-Western terrorist attack since its failed plot to assassinate former President Bush in 1993 in Kuwait." To hear the State Department tell it, the most active terrorist group on Saddam Hussein's payroll is probably Mujahedin-e Khalq, an organization dedicated to overthrowing the government of Iran—Iraq's supposed partner in the "axis of evil."

The problem is that while the governments of Iran, North Korea, and Iraq may well be evil, they are not evil because they sponsor terrorism. Terrorism, according to the State Department, is "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." North Korea and Iraq do lots of horrible things, but they are not the world's primary backers of "subnational groups" that attack "noncombatant targets." Had the president truly wanted to take the war on terrorism to its next logical destinations, Iraq and North Korea wouldn't have made the list; Syria and Lebanon would have.

Bush wasn't really proposing an extension of the war on terrorism at all; he was proposing a new war altogether. At first blush, the goal of that new war would seem to be stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but that's not exactly it. If that were its purpose, this administration would be talking tough to India and Pakistan; instead, it has actually *lifted* the sanctions the United States imposed after Islamabad tested nuclear weapons in May 1998. The administration's true goal is to stop *really bad regimes* from getting weapons of mass destruction, which is why the speech mentioned Iran, North Korea, and Iraq. That's not a bad goal at all. But to achieve it the Bush administration is going to have to take on some long-standing Republican assumptions.

First, it must deal with the supply of weapons of mass destruction as well as the demand. Judging from the State of the Union address, Bush's strategy seems to be to scare Tehran, Pyongyang, and Baghdad into abandoning their pursuit of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. With Saddam, that threat carries some weight—because the United States may attack if Iraq doesn't comply. But everyone knows the United States isn't going to war with North Korea or Iran. For one thing, if we attacked North Korea, we'd probably destroy our alliance with South Korea, whose president has staked his career on rapprochement with Pyongyang. Yes, the United States can impose sanctions. But we've imposed them for years, and North Korea and Iran have been steadily bolstering their arsenals nonetheless.

If the Bush administration is serious, it needs to go after supply. Since the cold war's end, the Russian defense ministry has reported 175 attempts to steal nuclear materials from its poorly guarded storehouses. In 1998 an employee at a Russian nuclear lab in Arzamas was arrested for trying to sell nuclear weapons designs to representatives of the governments of Afghanistan and Iraq. And yet last year the Bush administration tried to *cut* the Department of Energy's budget for nuclear security in the former USSR (DOE handles the bulk of such efforts) by 32 percent. Congress restored the funding, but when it gave the administration $20 billion in discretionary spending for anti-terrorism efforts after September 11, the Bushies didn't spend a dime on Russian nuclear safety. The administration's just-released budget is better, but it still leaves funding for the highly respected Nunn-Lugar program—which secures Russian uranium and bomb-grade plutonium against theft—essentially flat.

Installing security cameras in Russian warehouses and paying the salaries of Russian scientists sounds a lot like foreign aid, which is probably why the Bush administration hasn't made it a priority. But it's the vital corollary to the president's bellicose rhetoric. In fact, if the Bushies really want to keep uranium, long-range missiles, and poison gas from Saddam Hussein and Ayatollah Khamenei, they need to dramatically *expand* America's nuclear safeguard efforts to include Pakistan, whose nuclear materials and know-how are, if anything, even more vulnerable than Russia's. Unless the Bush administration begins taking this unglamorous preventative work seriously, all its high-pitched rhetoric won't impress anyone; in fact, it will start to grate.

And there's a second test for whether the Bush administration is serious about this new war: its policy on fuel efficiency. Most Americans would be startled to learn that almost half of the oil Iraq exports goes to the United States. The revenue is supposed to be placed in a U.N. escrow account, to be used for humanitarian purposes. But diplomats estimate that Saddam diverts as much as $2 billion every year into his biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons programs.

The Bush administration says it wants to wean the United States off foreign oil—including Saddam's. And it calls for increased oil exploration in places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). But even if you support drilling in ANWR, as TNR does, it alone won't produce nearly enough oil to end America's foreign dependence. For that, the government needs to force Detroit to produce cars and minivans that are more fuel-efficient. As TNR's Gregg Easterbrook has pointed out, fuel efficiency rates, which peaked in the late 1980s, have been deteriorating ever since the SUV craze hit. And a big reason is that Republicans in Congress (with help from the United Auto Workers) have defeated efforts to toughen standards for gas mileage.

Fuel efficiency may sound like a banal weapon for something so grand as a struggle against an "axis of evil." But the United States didn't defeat its last evil enemy through military power alone. Mostly, we beat it because of the strength of our economy, our democracy, and our example around the world. If we are to win this new contest against "the world's most dangerous regimes" armed with "the world's most destructive weapons," it will probably be the same way: with quiet, intelligent political decisions that wear down our foes and give us the means to continue the fight. To its credit, the Bush administration says it will defy its allies overseas if that's what it takes to win once again. Let's hope it also has the courage to defy its allies at home.

PETER BEINART

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Palestinian Authority

YASIR ARAFAT IS one of the great survival artists of his time, but he may have survived his own significance. He is, politically speaking, already living posthumously. He is a mere placeholder for a Palestinian politics that has not yet emerged. And he owes his marginalization, his historical impotence, not merely to the Israeli tanks that are surrounding him in Ramallah, in deserving recompense for his failure to bring to justice the Palestinian assassins of an Israeli Cabinet minister, and not merely to Ariel Sharon's long-standing grudge against him. He owes his impotence to his failure to have delivered to his people anything except a vast suppurating sense of grievance, a self-pity the size of Palestine.

Arafat has been condemned to the periphery of history by the facts of his history. And he has not been condemned only by Israel. The really remarkable thing about Yasir Arafat's physical and diplomatic isolation is that the government of the United States supports it and the governments of most of the Arab states do not vociferously or even sincerely object to it. The man seems to have reached the end of his elasticity. It is deeply satisfying to watch the escape artist, the man who pandered to everybody, fail to escape, and find no object for his pandering. In 2000 at Camp David and then in 2001 at Taba, he was offered almost everything, and he walked away from it. Perhaps he was counting on everybody to forget that this was so. Oddly enough, they have not forgotten.

And yet it is important to think beyond the diabolization of Yasir Arafat, because it cannot be the end of the story. The story is grimmer even than that. There is Arafat and there are the Palestinians. The discrediting of Arafat is fine and just, but it runs the danger of reducing the analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to a difference of views about one man. The really disturbing thing about the conflict is not that Arafat stands in the way of peace. The really disturbing thing is that if Arafat got out of the way, there would still be no reason to think hopefully about the possibility of Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation.

The controversy about Arafat must not be allowed to obscure the reality of Palestinian politics, which is that the Palestinian community is in a condition of severe internecine conflict. Over the past decade, the political culture of the Palestinians has undergone a dramatic transformation. The supremacy of secular Palestinian nationalism is long gone. The secularists have been overwhelmed by the jihadists, by the Allah-intoxicated haters of Israel; and it did not help the secularists that they saw the Oslo accords as an opportunity to enrich themselves, and that they failed to offer any principled opposition to Hamas and Islamic Jihad, for whom Hezbollah represents the glittering model of how to think about, and act against, the Jewish state.

Who are the Palestinians? Are they nationalists who want security and dignity, or are they chiliasts who want revenge and redemption? Do they aspire to sanctity or to statehood? Do they wish to go to heaven or to the World Trade Organization? The later years of Yasir Arafat's rule will be remembered as the period in which the Palestinian leadership attempted to dodge these questions. The sterility of the Palestinians' present situation is the direct consequence of a leadership that thought it could praise moderation in the morning and martyrdom in the evening, a leadership that bequeathed a dreadful confusion about the moral and political substance of Palestinian life.

Israel can make peace with the Palestinians, Israel must make peace with the Palestinians, but not until the Palestinians decide who they are. Are they Abu Mazen and his diplomatic reason, or are they Wafa Idris and her suicidal bomb? (Suicidal, but also homicidal: The self-immolation of these Palestinian zealots is so fascinating to the media that they forget sometimes to mention that these people are also plain murderers.) Yasir Arafat likes to believe that he is all of the Palestinians, but he cannot be all of them, at least not coherently. And it is the incoherence of his leadership that has brought him to the little siege in Ramallah. There is a war—sometimes a shooting war—taking place between Palestinians, and it can no longer be disguised by the war taking place between Israelis and Palestinians. Arafat refuses to take sides in the Palestinian-Palestinian war, and so he has nothing to offer the future of Palestinian politics, which is to say, he has nothing to offer the future of Israeli-Palestinian relations. He is over, but the struggle for Palestinian identity is not over; and that struggle imposes upon Israel not so much the obligation of peace as the obligation of vigilance. ■

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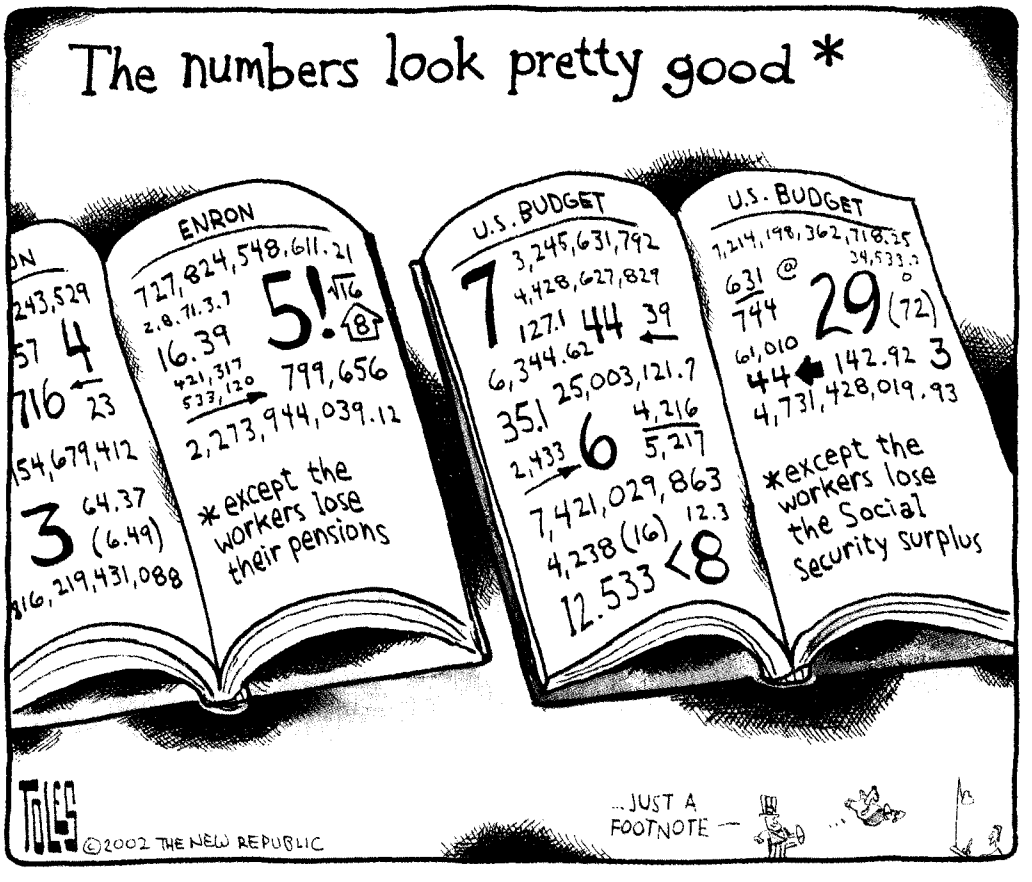
NOTEBOOK

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT: Describing his economic security plan in the State of the Union address, President Bush declared that it could be summed up in one word: "jobs." It's a strategy he's used repeatedly to blunt Democratic attacks that his various efforts at economic stewardship—the tax cut, the stimulus bill—consist mostly of tax cuts for corporations and wealthy individuals. You might recall, for example, that just after the January 5 speech in which he promised that "not over my dead body" would the tax cut be rolled back, he traveled to Oregon—the state with the country's highest unemployment rate—to make a pitch for his economic plan. There, he commiserated with the out-of-work at Portland's Youth Opportunity Center, a federally financed program that helps jobless young people in the city's poorest neighborhood. The half-hour photo op and visit produced some touching copy: Several youngsters talked to the press about their former lives on the streets; a girl named Amy sang "God Bless America." At a speech later in the day, Bush praised the work being done at the job-training program: "I went by and saw the good instructors there that are trying to help people help themselves." Fast-forward to the release of the Bush budget last Monday: It cuts $545 million from job-training programs—including about 80 percent of the funds for the center Bush visited. Needless to say, the program's beneficiaries are stunned. "I was like, 'How could you come visit here if you're going to do that?' " a formerly homeless 19-year-old named Jesse McDaniel asked *The Oregonian* last week. As he entered the center that day, Bush had asked the assembled jobless his own question: "Alright, what are you learning?" Presumably, that they shouldn't trust him.

FIRE SALE: As this week's TRB notes (page 6), there are few things the Bush administration could do to better improve American security than ensuring that Russia's nuclear stockpiles don't find their way into the wrong hands. Unfortunately, even as the president travels the country invoking the "axis of evil," one of the best programs for safeguarding Russian uranium is in danger of falling apart. Back in 1991 Thomas Neff, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, proposed buying high-enriched uranium from the Russian bomb program, blending it down into the low-enriched uranium that fuels nuclear reactors, and selling it on the American market. And so, in 1993, the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC)—then a branch of the Department of Energy—signed a 20-year contract with the Russians to do just that. There was just one catch: USEC was slated for privatization, which meant that in addition to making the world a safer place it was going to have to produce shareholder value. As privatization approached in 1998, Neff, then-World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz, and New Mexico Senator Pete Domenici suggested that perhaps this was not a great idea. Unfortunately no one listened, and USEC was spun off into a private corporation. One year later USEC tried to boost its bottom line by threatening to pull out of the deal with Russia unless the U.S. government gave the company a $100 million dollar subsidy (see "Power Failure" by Sarah Wildman, December 27, 1999). Luckily, the feds called USEC's bluff, and USEC backed down. But now USEC is doing something even worse—it's threatening the Russians. A five-year fixed-price plan ended in December 2001, and USEC is now demanding that Russia lower its prices before the company buys any more uranium. The move makes perfect market sense: USEC isn't doing particularly well—one of the two U.S. plants that processes weapons-grade uranium into nuclear fuel has closed—and the company presumably thinks the Russians don't have anywhere else to sell the uranium anyway. The problem, of course, is that there are in fact plenty of entities—



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Al Qaeda, Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, just to name a few—that would pay handsomely for weapons-grade uranium. Our best insurance that the Russians don't sell to them is to buy it ourselves—whether or not USEC makes a profit. Some things, after all, are too important to leave to the magic of the marketplace. Are you listening, President Bush?

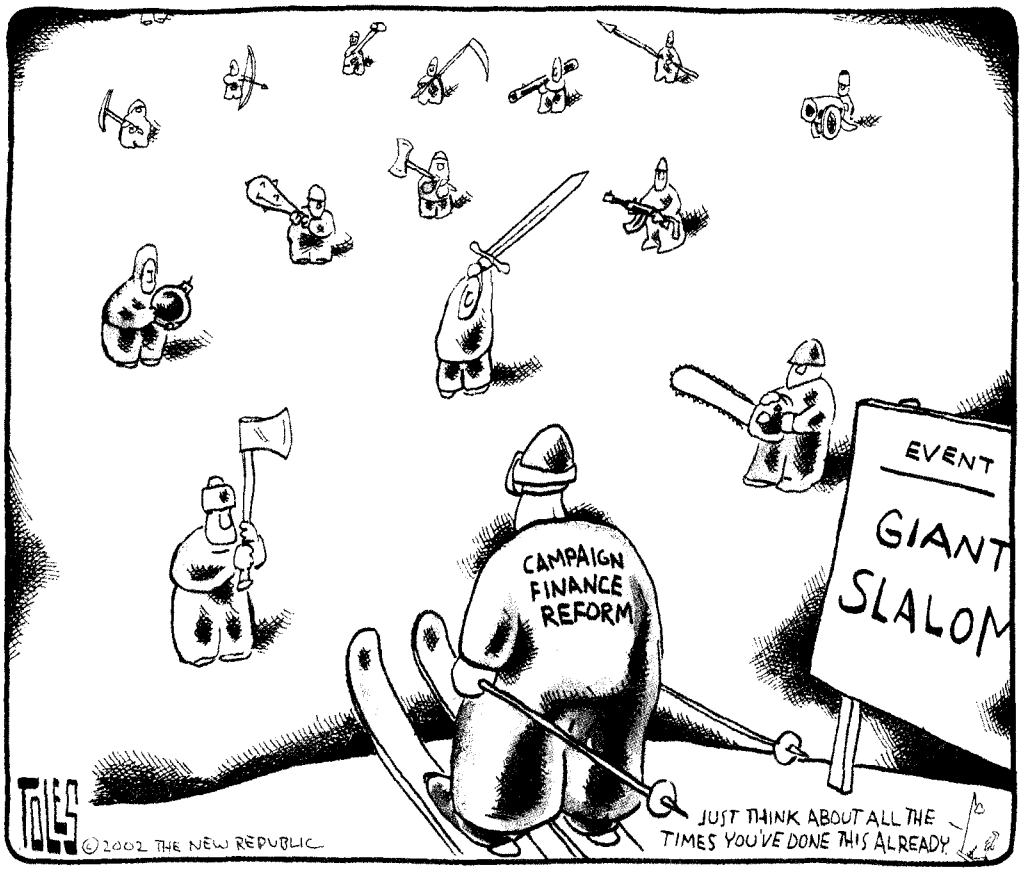
SO MUCH TO DO...: Since September 11 the Bush White House has often accused its policy critics of interfering with national security. In recent months the charge has been leveled at those raising questions about civil liberties and budget priorities. And now, perversely, it seems the White House is making it against even those trying to determine what security failures may have made the events of September 11 possible. Vice President Dick Cheney has reportedly threatened to portray Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle as an obstacle to the war on terrorism if Daschle proceeds with Senate hearings—potentially embarrassing to the White House—examining why the attacks on New York and Washington weren't prevented. According to *Newsweek*, Cheney called to tell Daschle: "If the Democrats insisted, Bush administration officials might say they're too busy running the war on terrorism to show up. Press the issue, Cheney implied, and you risk being accused of interfering with the mission." Indeed, it's a wonder Cheney even had time to make that call—not because he's so busy running the war, but rather because his schedule is so full of political events that have nothing to do with it. Cheney plans to attend dozens of fund-raisers for GOP candidates between now and November, kicking off this week with events in Indiana and Kentucky. The president himself is already booked for 40 campaign events. Even national security adviser Condoleezza Rice managed to deliver the keynote address at last weekend's Conservative Political Action Conference. Amazing how you can find time when you want to, isn't it?

AS FOR THE OTHER TIMES...: "This idea that every time somebody [in Congress] does something [it's] because of a contribution is BS; sometimes it isn't."—Wyoming Senator Craig Thomas, *Roll Call*, February 4

DISPATCH FROM THE END OF AMERICAN CULTURE: "We've gone through a couple of scripts that we didn't like, one being that because I think they were portraying me too much as 'The Partridge Family' or something, you know? I'm a little more gritty than that and a little more bluesy and rock-and-roll, so they got to get the music down to where it's gutsy rock-and-roll blues-type music, not 'My Fair Lady' or 'The Van Camp Family' or whatever it was."—Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura, discussing a planned Broadway musical about his life, FOX NEWS, "On the Record," February 5

LEGISLATIVE ALL-NIGHTER?: "[T]he two-minute phone call with Mr. Lay was solely about the legislative prospects, not the content, of an economic stimulus bill. Contrary to Rep. Waxman and Terry McAuliffe, no lobbying occurred. In fact, the provision to make the corporate alternative minimum tax relief retroactive had not even surfaced then, and neither I nor anyone else to my knowledge had even heard of the idea."—White House Budget Director Mitch Daniels, describing an October 11 phone call in a letter to *The Washington Post*, February 1

"A $100 billion economic stimulus plan ... won approval Friday [October 12] by a Republican-dominated House committee.... [Included in the package is repeal of the corporate alternative minimum tax, retroactive to Jan. 1 of this year."—Associated Press, October 12, 2001 (Thanks to *Spinsanity.com*.) ■



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POST SERIES | *32 Days in November and December*

In the Newsroom, Nerves of Steel

Fourth in a series

By BOB WOODWARD
Washington Post Staff Writer

Tuesday, November 13

At 9:05 a.m., Bob Woodward strode into the *Washington Post* newsroom. It had been less than 24 hours since the paper's undaunted executive editor, Leonard Downie, had given Woodward the monumental task of documenting nothing less than the Bush administration's response to nothing less than the September 11 attacks. But Woodward walked with a spring in his step. The night before, chatting with Attorney General John Ashcroft in the greenroom before their appearances on "Larry King Live," enjoying a Diet Coke and some slices of pineapple, Woodward had offhandedly mentioned the story, and already the calls were coming in. But perhaps Woodward's comment to Ashcroft was not offhanded at all. He was no novice in this town. He knew how leaking begins.

"Matalin, Powell, Rumsfeld, and Tenet all phoned to say they'd like to talk to you for the story," Woodward's researcher Jeff Himmelman said as he handed Woodward a sheaf of message slips, "and Karl Rove's been holding on line three for the past hour. He said he'd wait until you got in."

"The word's out on P Street, kid," Woodward said. "Now watch how this is done."

"Woodward," he said as he picked up the phone. He held it gently, the receiver cradled to his ear. "I hear you, Karl, I hear you. But no spin, OK?" He began to jot down notes. "Hold on. What was that? Condi wore what?"

After the phone call with Rove, Woodward went to Downie's office to brief the editor on his progress. "Len, I'd like to do this story in fewer than forty-seven parts," Woodward said, putting his hands on Downie's desk and leaning toward him, "but it just wouldn't be right. History deserves better."

"OK. But what have you got?" Downie asked.

Woodward remembered Bradlee asking that question. He drew himself up and said: "I can't reveal my source, Len, you know that. But I have a senior White House aide who says that Bush was"—he paused to look at his meticulously crafted notes—"'brave, decisive, and never-wavering' in the days after September 11. 'The president set the course for the war on terrorism and everyone else fell in behind him.' My source says that Bush's performance was reminiscent of Roosevelt—both of them." The hair on the back of Downie's neck stood up.

"There's more, Len. They're leaking like it's going out of style. Remember that apparent lie by Karl Rove, about the 'credible threat' to Air Force One? It was on the up-and-up. Some innocent misunderstanding by a nameless junior staffer. Bush was hopping mad—turns out that when danger lurks, he gets more resolute."

Downie nodded and stroked his chin. "As soon as Len went for his chin, I knew I had the green light," Woodward recalled in a January interview in the sleek dining room of his Georgetown home. "There was no turning back."

"Go for it," Downie instructed him.

Woodward walked out of Downie's office and back into the newsroom, where Himmelman was waiting for him. "Condi just called," Himmelman said. "But she's home sick with a hundred-and-three-degree fever and I forgot to ask for her number." Himmelman's fingers trembled as he frantically flipped through Woodward's massive Rolodex. A film of sweat formed on his upper lip.

"Never mind her number," Woodward said. "Did you learn anything else?"

Himmelman was amazed at the man's dedication. "Well, actually, it's erythromycin. Condi's on erythromycin."

"Good work, Jeff. Now nail that down. I can't just put the antibiotic in the paper cold. Nail the sucker down! We've got a long road ahead of us, a lot of calls to return, and I'm going to need

See **NEWSROOM**, *A14, Col. 3*

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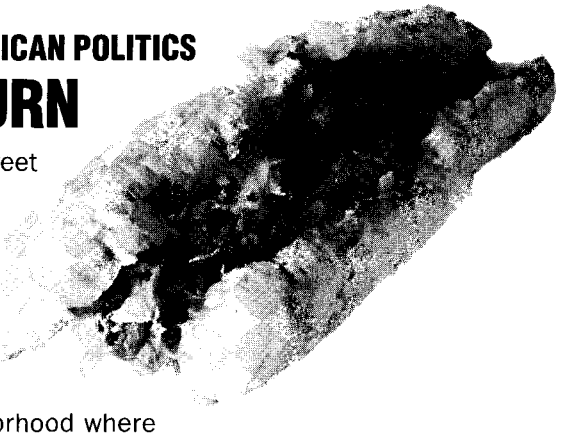
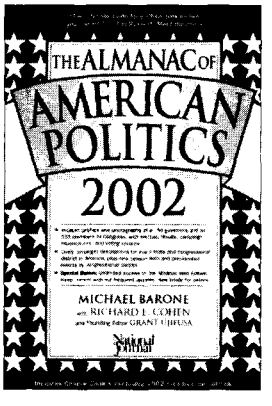


"The 1st runs north on both sides of the Broad Street corridor to include much of black North Philadelphia and south through most of heavily Italian South Philadelphia, where Italian families and their grocery stores and restaurants have been pressed tightly into narrow English and Indian-named streets under a tangle of overhead wires; this is the neighborhood where the various Rockys were filmed and the original Philadelphia cheesesteaks are sold."

—The Almanac of American Politics on Pennsylvania's 1st Congressional District



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Bush's nonwar budget.

Hide and Sneak

By JONATHAN CHAIT

AS HE WENT about crafting last year's budget, President Bush had a problem. He wanted a big tax cut more than anything else, but polls showed the public was more interested in social spending. So Bush set out to obscure the trade-off between these objectives. His method? Hide his priorities behind the supposedly huge budget surplus. "We have increased our budget at a responsible four percent, we have funded our priorities, we have paid down all the available debt, we have prepared for contingencies—and we still have money left over," he announced in his 2001 budget speech to Congress.

As he goes about promoting this year's budget, released on Monday, Bush still has the same problem: He remains wedded to tax cuts über alles, and, while his personal ratings remain stratospheric, poll after poll shows (by a wide margin) that the public would rather scale back the tax cut than run a deficit. And, since the surplus has evaporated, he can no longer hide behind the fiction of limitless resources. Fortunately for him, he has two new concealments: a war and a Democratic Congress. This year's plan is to hide behind both.

The administration's use of the war was nicely exemplified in a recent *Washington Post* op-ed by Budget Director Mitchell Daniels. Under the headline "A WARTIME BUDGET," Daniels began by comparing September 11 to Pearl Harbor. Just as Franklin Roosevelt slashed domestic spending, he argued, Bush also has to restrain domestic spending to boost defense. "Consequently," he concluded, "the president has directed that all other activities of government must be constrained." The historical analogy is absurd. From 1940 to 1945, defense spending grew from 1.7 percent of the economy to 37.5 percent. Bush, by contrast, proposes raising it over his first five years from 3 percent of the gross domestic product to ... 3.3 percent. September 11 may *feel* like Pearl Harbor, but as a fiscal event it doesn't approach World War II or even the cold war. FDR, moreover, instituted a huge tax hike, especially on the rich, to pay for the increase. Can't we at least give the rich a smaller tax cut than promised? Nope. Daniels's op-ed doesn't mention taxes at all.

Bush and his staffers speak as if tax revenues and defense spending were somehow not fungible. Instead, the administration will only discuss trade-offs between defense, domestic spending, and deficits—never taxes. When they discuss spending cuts or deficits, they take care to associate them with the war. Last month, for instance, the administration announced its defense increase the same day the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released projections of budget deficits for the next several years. The White House almost certainly intended the coincidence. Many newspapers, including *The New York Times*, combined the deficit news and the Pentagon budget hike in a single article. The effect was to juxtapose the two stories, suggesting that deficits are the result of the defense increase—and therefore necessary.

Naturally, the president and his staffers play up the size of the defense hike. In his budget message, Bush calls homeland security his "first priority" and boasts of "the biggest increase in defense spending in twenty years." In contrast, they play down the cost of the tax cuts. As Daniels told reporters, "tax relief is a very, very small factor in this budget." Listening to them, you'd never know that last year's tax cut costs more than twice as much this year's defense and homeland security increases over the next decade. Nor would you suspect that the *additional* tax cuts Bush proposes this year exceed his homeland security and defense increases combined, both this year and in years to come.

IN HIS State of the Union speech, Bush conceded that "our budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term so long as Congress restrains spending and acts in a fiscally responsible manner." If deficits go beyond the next few years, in other words, it's not his fault.

It's true that Bush's budget forecasts just a small deficit next year. So why not just cut a little more and avoid the embarrassment of deficits altogether? Because the president doesn't intend to make the spending cuts in his budget stick. We've seen this before. Last year Bush announced he would allow federal spending to rise at 4 percent, and he made a show of slashing wasteful subsidies. But he put little effort into it, and in the end Congress restored most of his cuts—ending up with a 7 percent hike, even before September 11. This year the White House is again pretending to cut pork, but it has again signaled its lack of seriousness. Daniels joked to the press that his anti-spending crusade belongs on a list of "Mitch's Greatest Flops." Another administration official told the *Post*, "We have to watch how we use our capital. People in Congress are very interested in water projects."

Most conservatives accept this calculation. Heritage Foundation economist and offshore-tax-haven lobbyist Daniel Mitchell (yes, Bush supporters include both a Mitchell Daniels *and* a Daniel Mitchell) told the *Times* he expects no anti-spending crusade. "The reason for that politically," observed Mitchell, "is that the Bush administration has decided, probably for pretty good reasons, that there are other priorities right now, and getting into a fight with Congress that would not be easy to win would undermine those priorities." The operating principle within the conservative movement is that maximum political capital must be devoted to cutting taxes—and if that means not antagonizing Congress over spending, so be it. Besides, Bush is implicitly counting on Congress to restore his unpopular cuts, such as freezing Head Start or cutting low-income heating assistance. This gives the president the best of both worlds: His image as a compassionate conservative remains intact, but he can blame Congress for the fiscal consequences.

Does it really matter if the budget runs a small deficit this year, with the economy in recession? Of course not. The

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problem is the next ten years. And here, as the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities notes, the administration lards its budget with fanciful assumptions. It lowballs various spending programs—for instance, it says Medicare will cost some $300 billion less than the CBO predicts—and pretends popular tax credits will suddenly expire. Take away these and other accounting gimmicks, and Bush's long-term budget scenario gets about $1 trillion worse.

This means that, unless the economy consistently surpasses expectations, the government will find itself laden with debt as the baby-boom generation retires. Conservatives downplay the dangers of debt, but remember, even Bush's own Social Security commission admits it can't fix the system without a huge infusion of general revenues. If the budget runs deficits, of course, those revenues will be hard to come by, forcing either crippling debt or larger cuts in retirement programs than either party can stand. And if that eventually comes to pass, Bush will have another handy way to avoid owning up to his priorities: He'll no longer hold office. ■

Cairo Dispatch

Tie Breaker

By Joshua Hammer

For Ramzi Kamel, the Yom Kippur War never ended. A 45-year-old officer in the Egyptian army, Kamel (a pseudonym) was a teenage cadet at a Cairo military academy when Arab armies attacked Israel on October 6, 1973. "I was too young to fight," he says. "I have always regretted that." Today, in the Heliopolis district of Cairo, Kamel helps manage the October War Panorama museum, a concrete cylinder filled with captured Israeli weaponry and lurid displays celebrating Egypt's thrust across the Suez Canal at the start of the conflict. One morning last week, the officer led me upstairs to a darkened hall, where I rotated on a circular platform through a "living diorama" of burned-out Israeli tanks, coiled barbed wire, and shattered palm trees. The painted backdrop depicted Egyptian soldiers storming an Israeli bunker and laying a pontoon bridge across the canal; martial music blared, bombs exploded, and a sonorous-voiced announcer hailed "Egypt's lightning victory." As we waded out through a throng of exhilarated students from Alexandria, Kamel told me that the number of visitors to Panorama has doubled to 1,000 per day since the intifada began almost 17 months ago. "This museum is a way of mobilizing the new generation," he said. "Our aim is to maintain the same hostile feelings toward the enemy."

That won't be difficult. Since the signing of a peace agreement in 1979, Egypt and Israel have opened embassies in each other's countries, established commercial flights between their capitals, and initiated cross-border trade. But Egyptian hostility toward the Jewish state has never really dissipated, and since the intifada began, the "cold peace" has turned icy. Egyptian newspapers vilify Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon as a "mass murderer" and a "terrorist." In November 2000 Egypt withdrew its ambassador and sharply reduced its embassy staff. Most commercial contacts between the countries have been cut, and Egypt's primary peace dividend—a flourishing Red Sea tourist trade that attracted 400,000 Israelis per year in the 1990s—has evaporated. Few Egyptians are calling for tearing up the Camp David accords just yet: "Israel is a hateful reality that we have to deal with," one prominent Cairo magistrate told me. But the pressure is growing on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to take a tougher anti-Israel stand—closing the embassy, ending commercial flights, or something of the kind. "The intifada is the core issue in Egypt," says a Western diplomat in Cairo. "Every conversation turns to it."

Ironically, the vilification campaign comes as Mubarak has renewed efforts to resolve the Middle East conflict. After launching a peace initiative with Jordan's King Abdullah II last year, Mubarak has pressured Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat to arrest Islamic militants and has met repeatedly with top Israeli officials, including a daylong encounter in January with Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer in Sharm el-Sheikh. Mubarak is increasingly concerned, Western and Egyptian officials told me, that the escalating violence could spill over into Egypt, destabilizing his regime. In a worst-case scenario, the Israeli military would reoccupy the West Bank and Gaza Strip, sparking massive protests in Cairo and other cities that could lead to prolonged anti-government rioting. But, even as he has pushed for a peaceful resolution behind the scenes, Mubarak has done little to deter the Israel-bashing in his own country. The Egyptian military keeps the country on a martial footing in order to justify its soaring budget, say political analysts. And, as in other Arab nations, the regime uses the intifada to divert popular anger over the imploding economy, corruption, and post-9/11 roundups of Islamic fundamentalists. "It keeps the people focused on an external enemy," says Negad Borai, a lawyer and human rights advocate in Cairo.

I got a sense of just how tense relations have become when I boarded the twice-weekly Air Sinai flight in Tel Aviv for the short trip to Cairo. Except for a pair of European backpackers, an Italian computer salesman, a small group of American tourists, and a half-dozen Israeli businessmen, the aging Boeing 707 was empty. My seatmate, a textile trader from Haifa, gazed nervously out the window at the Sinai desert. "My heart skips a beat whenever I land in Cairo," he said, citing the recent murder of an Israeli businessman in another Middle Eastern capital, Amman. "I tell people I'm from Canada." Meeting me at the Cairo airport, an Egyptian TV journalist suggested I hide my Israeli press credentials and anything else that would identify me as living in Israel. "If you're coming from Israel, people assume you're a Mossad spy," she said.

Joshua Hammer is Jerusalem bureau chief for *Newsweek* and author of *Chosen by God: A Brother's Journey.*

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The Egyptian media have fueled this paranoia. Newspapers—both government-run and independent—claim that the Mossad is injecting the AIDS virus into the Jaffa oranges it exports. And during the recent Cairo trial of 52 homosexuals on charges of "defiling Islam," prominent papers doctored photographs to make it look as if several of the accused men were wearing Israeli military uniforms. The regime has sometimes abetted the media's efforts. One of the most talked-about spectacles these days is the show trial of Sherif al-Filali, 35, an engineer accused, on flimsy evidence, of selling military secrets to the Mossad while working in Europe. I attended one of al-Filali's appearances at Cairo's central courthouse, a crumbling edifice built at the height of the Ottoman Empire. In a smoke-filled courtroom packed with security policemen and TV cameras, I pushed my way to a wire-mesh cage, where al-Filali—a doughy, bespectacled man wearing a white prison jumpsuit—greeted me with a weary smile. Insisting that the confession he'd signed was extracted after weeks of beatings and electric shocks, he told me that "the government wants to make me a sacrifice." It is not an implausible claim: Al-Filali was found innocent last June at his first trial, but Mubarak refused to accept the verdict. Al-Filali's lawyer, Ahmed Said Abdel-Khaleq, said the Egyptian media and public were clamoring for a conviction. "I cannot defend this man freely," says Khaleq, who admits he fears for his own safety. "The hatred toward Israel is too high right now."

SUCH ANTI-ISRAEL PROPAGANDA has had a chilling effect on nearly all connections between Egyptians and Israelis. A Cairo textile manufacturer I met keeps his dealings with Israeli importers a secret, even lying to his wife when he catches the occasional flight to Tel Aviv. "If an Egyptian goes to the Israeli Embassy to get a visa, on the way out he'll be thrown into a state security car and interrogated," says Hisham Kassem, the publisher of the weekly *Cairo Times*. Merely doing business with Israel can incite accusations of treason. Egypt's minister of agriculture recently sued three journalists who'd called him a traitor for importing melon seeds from Israel to supply a state farm in the Sinai desert.

Perhaps the most dispiriting aspect of the vilification campaign is that it effectively suppresses the free exchange of ideas. Kassem told me that he was publicly excoriated after writing an editorial in which he blamed the Syrian regime, not Ariel Sharon, for the recent assassination of Lebanese Christian warlord Elias Hobeika. The publisher had hoped to organize a post-September 11 international conference on terrorism and Middle East conflict resolution, but he had to cancel his plans when he realized that inviting Israelis would have left him blacklisted among fellow journalists and advertisers. "It could have finished me off," he says.

Indeed, it's hard to find a public figure or organization that supports constructive dialogue with Israel. After some looking, however, I did come across one. The Cairo Peace Society bills itself as a foundation committed to improving relations with its neighbor across the Sinai. Headed by Egypt's former ambassador to the Soviet Union, it boasts a total membership of five people. ■

A gorgeous mosaic unravels in Texas.

Identity Crisis

By MICHELLE COTTLE

LAREDO, TEXAS

TUCKED INTO THE backseat of a black Range Rover, the candidate is on the phone with a local reporter. And he is causing trouble. "I want to propose a debate," announces Dan Morales, who careened into this year's Texas governor's race in the final hour of the final day of filing. Playing to the sense of neglect prevalent among South Texans, the former state attorney general informs Tricia Cortez of the *Laredo Morning Times*, "It's time to show that we take the border seriously." And, in Morales's opinion, a local showdown (televised, of course) with his Democratic primary opponent, Laredo businessman Tony Sanchez, would provide the ideal showcase—especially "since one of the candidates is from here." In fact, Morales adds, with great feeling, "It would be an insult to Laredo voters if any candidate would not agree to come before the voters." The two campaign staffers along for the ride start to laugh.

Morales's phone call is just one small incident in a primary battle that is growing uglier and uglier as the March 12 polling day approaches. Morales calls his opponent a fat-cat know-nothing who apparently "believes the office of governor is for sale," and he reminds Democrats that Sanchez was one of George W. Bush's elite Pioneer fund-raisers. Sanchez, for his part, has suggested that Morales can't speak "good Spanish" and that he got into Harvard Law School only because of affirmative action (which, to be fair, Sanchez enthusiastically supports). And aides to both candidates are fond of veiled references to the other's scandalous (and maybe even felonious) past. "There are a number of documents related to questionable business practices of Mr. Sanchez," says Morales communications director Jim Moore (who, making a bizarre situation even more bizarre, was fired from the Sanchez campaign in November). Sanchez advisers cite the "cloud hanging over" Morales, who "you don't know whether he's gonna get indicted tomorrow or the next day" for mishandling the state's 1998 tobacco settlement.

Nasty primary battles always upset party leaders, but this one particularly horrifies Texas Democrats because it is between two Hispanics. After the Dems' disastrous drubbing on Election Night 1998—which left them without a single statewide officeholder—party bigwigs woke up and began crafting a strategy for redemption in 2002. The game plan? Maximize minority turnout by assembling a "rainbow ticket." The party establishment lined up behind a black Senate candidate (former Dallas Mayor Ron Kirk), an Anglo candidate for lieutenant governor (former Comptroller John Sharp), and, most importantly, a gubernatorial contender with a south-of-the-border surname to excite the swelling ranks of Tejano voters (Tony Sanchez). The fact that Sanchez boasts a

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fortune of around $600 million—$30 million of which he reportedly pledged to put at the Dems' disposal—only sweetened the pot. A "coordinated campaign" office was up and running by last summer.

And then Dan Morales came along, messing up the whole gorgeous mosaic. Party power brokers counted on Hispanics being so grateful that a member of their community was being handed the gubernatorial nomination that they would cheerfully line up in support. As Sanchez himself put it last September, "Issues are important, but they are not as important as the fact that this is an opportunity to vote for one of your own." Well, turns out that issues may wind up mattering after all—that not all Tejanos think alike, that not all Tejanos like Tony Sanchez, and that some Tejano politicians have personal rather than simply communal ambitions. In other words, identity politics has been trumped by plain old politics. And it's glorious to behold.

THE SKUNK AT the garden party. The tornado on the trail drive. The burr in the saddle. Pick your Texasism. To Democratic Party officials, Morales is about as welcome in this year's primaries as a frog in the guacamole. For months he made noises about running for Senate, raising the specter of an anti-Hispanic backlash among black voters if he defeated Kirk in the primary. Back in November *The Dallas Morning News* reported that party leaders, including representatives from both the Sanchez and the Sharp campaigns, were pressuring Morales to cede the field to Kirk. So, in a way, Dems got what they asked for when Morales did a last-minute pirouette into the governor's race on January 2. Not that they saw it that way: One state senator accused Morales of "disregarding the welfare of the Democratic Party." Another representative accused him of "throwing a tantrum."

From the party's perspective, Morales is more dangerous than an Enron exec with a shredder. If Sanchez loses on March 12, he has vowed not to give a cent to the Morales campaign, leaving the chronically underfunded Democrats to pick up the slack. Increased Hispanic turnout for the high-profile gubernatorial primary could boost Kirk's primary opponent, Victor Morales (no relation to Dan), which could result in two Hispanic nominees and no African Americans, or throw the race to a third (Anglo) candidate, Ken Bentsen. Alternatively, the brutality of the primary could leave whomever wins so damaged and the Hispanic community so divided that everybody stays home in November, giving Republicans another big win in the general elections.

How exactly did Democrats get themselves into this mess? By now, pretty much every political watcher in the state can recite the backstory: In 1998 a wildly popular Governor Bush helped drag an otherwise unremarkable Republican slate to victory. But while W. whipped his hapless Democratic opponent, Garry Mauro, other Dems came within spitting distance of winning. Paul Hobby, the Democratic nominee for comptroller, and Sharp, the party's pick for lieutenant governor, both lost by less than 2 percent of the vote. The Republicans' margin of victory, most agreed, was the below-average Democratic turnout that year, especially within the Hispanic community. In 1994, with Dan Morales running for reelection as attorney general, 33.8 percent of Hispanic voters went to the polls; in 1998 that number fell to 26.7 percent.

Running the figures in his head, Sharp determined that to become lieutenant governor in 2002, what he needed was a nice set of Hispanic coattails to ride. A marketable Tejano at the top of the ticket would draw enough Hispanics to the polls to give Sharp that extra boost—even if the gubernatorial candidate himself didn't actually win. Thus, with '98 campaign posters still littering the countryside, Sharp set out on a recruiting mission. One of his first (unofficial) feelers reputedly went out to former HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros, still popular despite that unfortunate 1994 snafu involving sex, lies, and the FBI. As the story goes, Sharp contacted Cisneros on the very day Cisneros had been ordered to pay a $10,000 fine for his sins. Sharp said (or at least is said to have said): "Henry, I've had relatives who paid bigger fines for picking up deer off the side of the road. Come back to Texas and run for governor." Cisneros asked, "Could I win?" To which Sharp responded, "Nope, but I could!" Are the details of this Texas political tale 100 percent accurate? Don't bet the ranch on it. Nevertheless, the joke around Texas political circles became that John Sharp was on the prowl for a "Nope, but I could!" gubernatorial candidate.

Drafted by Sharp, Cisneros, and top party strategist Kelly Fero (now head of the "coordinated campaign"), Tony Sanchez came equipped with a few clear negatives. He doesn't much enjoy public appearances and did little campaigning until Morales's challenge forced him to. Back in December, Texas political operative Bill Miller told the *Austin American-Statesman* that the inside buzz among disappointed Democrats was that Sanchez "is a candidate without the skill set that you normally expect.... He doesn't have a willingness to engage. He doesn't have a passion for the issues, and he is not working very hard." There are also a couple of question marks in Sanchez's professional past, most notably the collapse of his S&L, Tesoro, during the high-flying 1980s. Environmentalists also grumble about how, after a stint on the state Parks and Wildlife Commission, Sanchez finagled a permit to drill for natural gas in a state park. Then there's the little matter of his big-money support for Bush. (Sanchez and his various business interests have enriched Bush's political coffers by more than $320,000 since 1995.) As for the candidate's own political views, nobody really knows, and he does his best to avoid specifics. A devout Catholic, he is personally pro-life, though he promises to uphold the right to choose. He talks vaguely about reforming state funding of both education and children's health care, but he is generally assumed to be your run-of-the-mill moderate-to-conservative Texas Democrat.

Not that Dan Morales is Mr. Politically Correct either. A former prosecutor, Morales carried a strict law-and-order outlook into the attorney general's office, angering minority groups who felt his office prosecuted death-penalty cases too enthusiastically. Morales also alienated environmentalists by siding with property-rights advocates in development disputes. But by far his gravest ideological offense was his broad interpretation of the 1996 *Hopwood* court ruling, which banned race-based admissions and financial aid policies at Texas public universities. On the trail, Morales energetically

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defends his position with the Republican-sounding argument that he is against racial quotas—which utterly delights Sanchez, who, on matters of affirmative action, is a die-hard paleoliberal.

Indeed, Sanchez has pledged to go after Morales on this rare clear-cut point of disagreement, and he intends to get personal. In a January speech to the state's AFL-CIO convention, Sanchez charged: "I don't like a fellow who gets to the top through affirmative action and picks up the ladder behind him." On an even more personal note, the Sanchez campaign (though perhaps not the candidate himself) likes to remind voters of the ongoing federal probe into whether Morales tried to inappropriately funnel hundreds of millions of dollars from the state's successful tobacco litigation to an attorney friend. Morales's people, in turn, fire back with ugly innuendo about Sanchez's business practices at Tesoro (he wound up paying the government $1 million to ward off a lawsuit), including a Mexican drug cartel's alleged use of the S&L to launder drug money during the 1980s. (Sanchez denied any knowledge.)

Such squabbling between two serious Hispanic candidates may give state Dems the vapors, but it has dramatically upped both state and national interest in the race, and it is expected to boost turnout as well. Publicly, party leaders have abandoned talk of a coordinated anything and now say that a tough primary is evidence of the party's vibrance. (One Dem even tried to convince me that, in fact, there never was an organized attempt to preset the ticket.) And while some Hispanic leaders wring their hands over their community's lack of political discipline, others delight in it. "This idea that we should all be thinking the same and stop fighting is an old, outdated interpretation that we need to move beyond," Tatcho Mindiola, head of the Mexican-American Studies Program at the University of Houston, recently told the *Houston Chronicle*. If nothing else, Democrats will send a battle-tested candidate into the arena with Republican Governor Rick Perry this fall. (Sanchez in particular needs to learn to take a punch.) And who knows? With ethnicity off the table, Sanchez will have to at least pretend to talk substance—which means that sometime between now and March 12, an issue or two might even get discussed. All of which could make this sordid mud fight the most edifying thing to happen to Texas politics in years. ■

Jerusalem Dispatch

Man on the Street

By ISABEL KERSHNER

ASK YOUR AVERAGE *New York Times* reader who would likely take power in the Palestine territories were Yasir Arafat to die, and they'd probably say Hamas. Indeed, the specter of fanatical theocrats running the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) is one of the most common arguments for why Israel should make sure he stays alive.

But Hamas and its white-robed leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, probably couldn't lead a post-Arafat Palestine. For one thing, a Hamas regime would never get the support of the numerous P.A. security agencies, made up of thousands of armed Fatah loyalists, whose backing will be crucial to any Arafat successor. (The most powerful P.A. security chiefs, Jibril Rajoub in the West Bank and Muhammad Dahlan in the Gaza Strip, both of whom have leadership ambitions of their own, would likely oppose a Hamas takeover.) For another, Israel and the international community would not stand for a radical Islamic takeover. The United States and Europe wouldn't provide the foreign aid on which the Palestinian Authority relies to function. And Israel would probably reoccupy the Palestinian cities of the West Bank and Gaza Strip rather than let them be ruled by the party of jihad.

What's more, after decades of observing Israeli democracy close-up—even from the dubious perspective of occupation—many Palestinians don't have the stomach for theocracy. In one recent poll, by Khalil Shikaki's Ramallah-based Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, only 17 percent of Palestinians said they would support a political system "as in Iran." In another poll, taken in December 2001 by the Palestinian-run Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, only 3 percent desired an Islamic state. Hamas may have prestige because it defies Israeli power; but that doesn't mean Palestinians want to be governed by it.

In the short term, therefore, Arafat's successor would probably come from the ranks of his longtime comrades, members of the generation that founded the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and then returned from exile after Oslo. Chief among the founding fathers is Mahmoud Abbas, better known as Abu Mazen, the 65-year-old secretary general of the PLO executive committee and number two in the PLO hierarchy. Another potential old-guard successor is Ahmed Qurei, or Abu Ala, the 63-year-old speaker of the Palestinian parliament, who under the (never ratified) Palestinian Basic Law would take over for 60 days should Arafat become incapacitated or die. Both men have good relations with the United States, and either could serve as a consensus candidate during a period of instability. But neither has much popular support: Both men score around 2 percent in Palestinian polls, and neither has played any role in the current intifada, which has boosted the stature of younger competitors. Indeed, both Abu Mazen and Abu Ala achieved their high posts largely by outlasting more dynamic rivals. At best, they could play the stopgap role that Yuri Andropov or Konstantin Chernenko played after the death of Leonid Brezhnev and before the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev.

ONE PARTICULARLY STRONG candidate to succeed Arafat in the long term, say Palestinian political analysts, is Marwan Barghouti, the 42-year-old head of Fatah's Tanzim militia in the West Bank. Barghouti spent six years in Israeli jails starting at age 18; did a stint as the Fatah student union leader at the West Bank's Birzeit University in the

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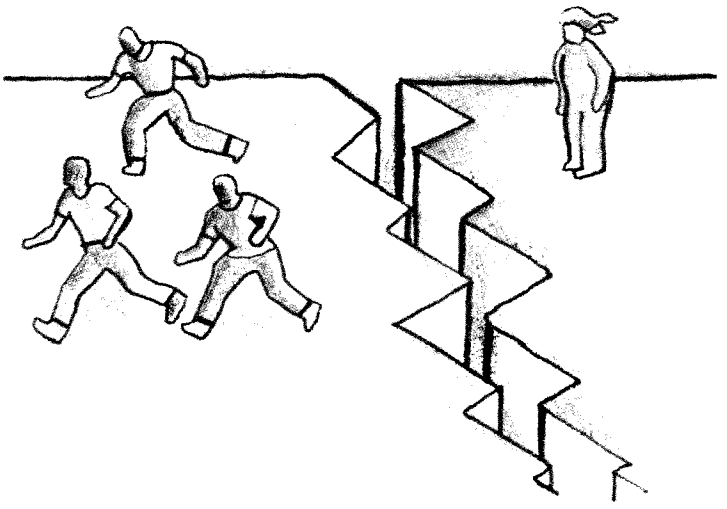
1980s; was deported to Jordan in 1988; and returned to the West Bank in 1994 under the terms of the Oslo accords. He has become a symbol of the revolt of the "insiders," the generation of Palestinians who grew up under Israeli occupation, matured during the first intifada of the late '80s and early '90s, and learned Hebrew in Israel's prisons. Having been cut out of the P.A. halls of power, the insiders have grown increasingly critical of their elders. "The basic message of the young guard is that the old guard has failed," says Shikaki. "Failed in ending the occupation, in good governance, and in building the state. The message since day one of the intifada has been that it is time for them to step aside."

The new intifada has offered the insiders a chance to establish an independent power base. "The intifada is being waged fifty percent against Israel and fifty percent against the PLO and the P.A.," says Saleh Abd al-Jawwad, head of the history and political science department at Birzeit University. "It was a protest, a rejection of the practices—and even of the leadership—of the P.A." Barghouti in particular has soared from relative obscurity to startling prominence in the past year—primarily for his role as head of the Tanzim, the unofficial paramilitary force that Arafat set up in the mid-'90s as a parallel, rival structure to the P.A. security forces. Barghouti has also garnered public sympathy in recent years as an anti-corruption campaigner in the Palestinian parliament, where he is an elected representative from Ramallah.

Barghouti is hardly a moderate. While coordinating the current intifada, he has developed a working relationship with Hamas through the grassroots Unified Committee of Nationalist and Islamic Forces, and has held joint press conferences with West Bank Hamas political leader Sheikh Hassan Yusef. Israeli security officials have called him a terrorist, and Barghouti himself is convinced he's on Israel's assassination hit list. Last September the Israeli Justice Ministry issued a warrant for his extradition and arrest, citing his alleged involvement in abetting the murder of Israeli civilians.

Despite his militancy, however, Palestinian observers consider Barghouti a pragmatist who strongly supported the Oslo process before growing disillusioned and who has long



called for a Palestinian state alongside Israel in the territories conquered in 1967. Barghouti has also never taken a strong public position on the inflammatory issue of the right of return of Palestinian refugees, speaking more vaguely of a just "solution" to their plight based on U.N. resolutions.

There are also signs that Israel might consider Barghouti better than the likely alternatives. While Barghouti was never an official Oslo negotiator, he has sat down with Israelis in the past—in the late '90s he took part in a Palestinian parliamentary delegation that met with Knesset members. Today, of course, he isn't negotiating; he's plotting armed attacks. But virtually any future Palestinian leader with credibility will have dirty hands from this intifada. And Israel has always preferred dealing with locals. Off the record, sources near the Israeli defense ministry speak enthusiastically of Barghouti's pragmatism.

For now, of course, Arafat remains the Palestinian Authority's undisputed leader. But eventually a younger generation will inherit his mantle. When that happens, Israel could find itself confronted with a Palestinian leader just as willing to sanction violence but potentially more pragmatic, less corrupt, and more familiar with the way Israelis think. And, in that case, they may have the intifada to thank. ■

How Bush turned on Arafat.

Torpedo Boat

By LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

THOUGH LOST IN the sea of words parsing President Bush's reference to the "axis of evil," another equally historic passage was contained in last week's State of the Union address. Along with Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, Bush singled out as America's foes "groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, Jaish-e-Mohammed." As it happens, three of the four operate largely against Israel, not against the United States. Couple that with the inclusion of Iran—which wouldn't have found its way onto Bush's roster but for its sponsorship of terror against the Jewish state—and you have the outlines of a momentous shift in U.S. policy. Bush's speech came less than one week after a still more telling remark: his accusation that Palestinian Authority

DAVID SUTER

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(P.A.) Chairman Yasir Arafat was "enhancing terror" (this about a man who only months ago Bush insisted the "world ought to applaud" for "trying to control radical elements"). And it came on the heels of the president's decision not to send Middle East peace-processor Anthony Zinni back to the region. As Ariel Sharon arrives in Washington for his fourth White House visit in one year, this much is now evident: Quietly, fitfully—but unmistakably—the Bush team has begun to see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the way Israel does.

So what changed? First, the war on terrorism. On January 3, Israel captured a ship, the *Karine A*, headed to Gaza from Iran packed with 50 tons of rockets, guns, and mortars. Its origin offered proof, as national security adviser Condoleezza Rice put it, of "Iranian interference." Iran, however, dispatched two arms shipments to the Palestinians last year, and American officials uttered not a peep. But, on September 11, the rules changed. And, in the midst of its war on terror, the Bush administration could hardly ignore evidence that Arafat himself was importing massive quantities of arms from a nation that the State Department had recently labeled the world's "most active state sponsor of terrorism."

But, with the *Karine A*, Arafat not only crossed the United States strategically; he crossed Bush personally. The episode humiliated the administration, single-handedly destroying a diplomatic mission into which the Bush team had sunk an extraordinary amount of political capital. The State Department's Zinni actually watched news of the *Karine A*'s capture on television while Arafat was sitting beside him. The P.A. chairman's subsequent dissembling, evasions, and outright lies—including a letter to Bush in which he denied any knowledge of the ship or its mission—enraged the president further. As a result, Arafat has accomplished what Ariel Sharon never could: He has aligned the United States and Israel more closely than at any time since the Reagan presidency.

"I MEAN, WHAT does he take us for?" That's how a senior State Department official describes the administration's immediate response to news of the *Karine A*. But following the initial shock, America's diplomatic corps went into denial. One week after the seizure, Secretary of State Colin Powell could still be heard insisting that he had "not seen any information that yet links [the *Karine A*] directly to Chairman Arafat." Another administration official pleaded to United Press International (UPI): "There is no benefit for Iran to become an adversary of Israel or the United States to the degree implied by the shipments—Iran is making new efforts to rejoin the community of law-abiding nations." On the ground in Israel, Zinni continued to enthuse about "real opportunities for progress," noting that both sides needed to focus on "building confidence."

Foggy Bottom's see-no-evil policy infuriated officials at the White House and the Pentagon. "Arafat slaps us in the face," recounts a senior Pentagon official, "and [the State Department's] only reaction is 'How can we brush this under the rug?'" But, on January 9, senior Israeli intelligence officials briefed their American counterparts on evidence of Arafat's involvement with the *Karine A*—the use of P.A. funds for the arms purchases, the involvement of Arafat's deputies, and proof that the Palestinian leader himself authorized the transfer—evidence that quickly found its way to the president. So, too, did proof that Iran had supplied the ship's cargo. Iran's involvement reinforced a point that aides in the Pentagon and the vice president's office had been making for more than a month: that Arafat isn't merely an enemy of Israel, he's a walking rogue state. As Vice President Dick Cheney explained in a January 28 appearance on CNN: "What's most disturbing isn't just the shipment of arms, it's the fact that it came from Iran." True, the administration had itself once entertained the idea of a rapprochement with the Islamic republic. But Iran's conduct during the war in Afghanistan—including evidence that Tehran has been harboring fleeing members of Al Qaeda—as well as Bush's black-and-white reading of the war on terror, had stalled the plan. And the *Karine A*, which amounted to a brazen example of state-sponsored terror—a practice to which the president insists the United States will no longer turn a blind eye—sank it altogether.

Iran's military involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also had immediate bureaucratic implications: By putting Arafat on the wrong side of the war on terrorism, the *Karine A* widened the debate about America's policy toward that conflict beyond the State Department. Officials at the Pentagon and the White House—who have much less invested in the peace process than their colleagues at Foggy Bottom—began wresting control of Israel policy from the State Department in mid-January while Powell was out of the country. With the secretary of state on his way to Afghanistan, the White House convened a principals' meeting that included Cheney, Rice, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage sitting in for Powell. Cheney and Rumsfeld came out swinging. The United States, they argued, should consider cutting its ties to Arafat. Armitage responded that even the *Israelis* weren't planning to do that. Bush wasn't there, and no decision was made. But a two-week-long debate had begun. And a door had been opened: Israel policy would no longer be the exclusive property of the State Department.

MEANWHILE, RUMSFELD'S TEAM not only persuaded the National Security Council (NSC) to hold up Zinni's original plan to return to Israel a few days later, but it also quashed a last-minute State Department proposal to dispatch Assistant Secretary of State William Burns—who happened to be traveling in the region—in his place. In this effort they were aided by the fact that the NSC's Arab-Israeli (but mostly Arab) point man, Bruce Riedel, had departed his White House post one month earlier. Defense Department protests have also held up the appointment of Riedel's designated successor, Middle East expert Alina Romanowski, whom Pentagon officials suspect of being insufficiently supportive of the Jewish state. In fact, Bush advisers now say the NSC's senior Arab-Israeli slot may never be filled. All of which has essentially left manage-

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ment of Israel policy at the NSC in the hands of Rice, whose views closely reflect the inclinations of the president.

And as the State of the Union address so vividly demonstrated, Bush has grown comfortable enough with those inclinations to enshrine them in official policy without consulting Foggy Bottom beforehand. Shortly after being apprised that Arafat knew the exact destination of the *Karine A*, Bush himself weighed in with a blunt letter to the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt. Publicly, the letter was described as an outline of the case linking Arafat to the *Karine A* and a request for Arab help in persuading Arafat to renounce terror. According to several officials, it was more of a warning. As one summarized it: "If Arafat doesn't get his act together, and fast, we've had it."

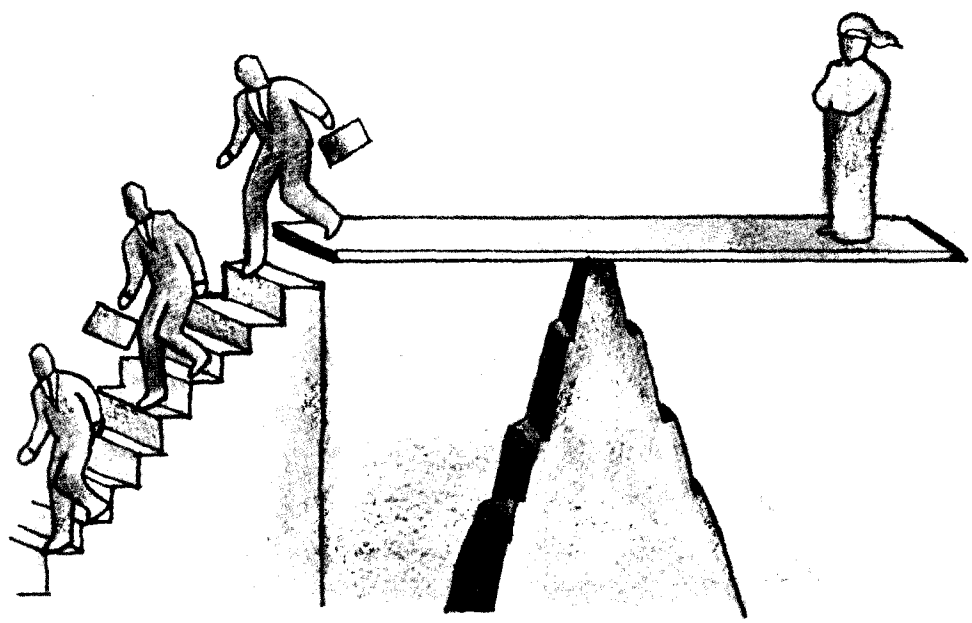
DURING THE THIRD week of January the president received a letter from Arafat in response. In it, the chairman denied knowing anything about the mysterious Iranian ship—despite the fact that the United States now possessed overwhelming evidence to the contrary. "Arafat lied directly to Bush," says one senior official. "No one does that, least of all someone who's already on probation." Arafat had feigned ignorance to Powell and other State Department officials. Yet Bush took the insult personally. "[The president] had already rejected the conventional wisdom that Arafat is someone who can be trusted, and always saw him clearly and for who he is," says Pentagon adviser Richard Perle. "But Arafat flatly lied, and the president is understandably upset about that." Privately, an exasperated Bush fumed to his aides about the baldness of Arafat's evasions. Publicly, he rued the fact that he had taken Arafat "at his word."

That Friday, January 25, Bush finally met with his principals—this time with Powell present—to reconcile their differences on Israel policy. In truth, word had already filtered down to a meeting of the Cabinet's deputies the day before: The president was disgusted with Arafat, but he wasn't ready to jettison the Palestinian leader just yet. Still, Rumsfeld and Cheney made their case once more: Arafat's involvement with Iran, his failure to crack down on the terrorists in his midst, his shameless lies about the *Karine A*—all these things disqualified him as a peace partner. At the very least, they argued, the United States should consider closing down the P.A.'s offices in Washington and adding Arafat's militias (the Al Aqsa Brigades, for instance) to the State Department's list of terror groups. And under no circumstances should Zinni be permitted to return to the region.

Powell countered that the key to dealing with Arafat is patience. Forceful action against him, he argued, would harm America's bilateral relations with its Arab allies—whose foreign ministries had besieged the State Department with pleas to remain engaged with the Palestinian leader—and destroy any prospects for a cease-fire on the ground. Bush split the difference, siding with Powell's admonition not to sever ties with Arafat and postponing any decision about shuttering the P.A.'s offices or placing Arafat's militias on the terror list. Still, the president agreed that Zinni shouldn't return to Israel any time soon. He also authorized the principals to ratchet up their anti-Arafat rhetoric.

Later that day the president himself did exactly that, accusing the Palestinian leader of "enhancing terror." Echoing Bush's remarks on ABC's "This Week" two days later, Cheney added, "We don't believe [Arafat].... He has been implicated now in an operation that puts him working with a terrorist organization, Hezbollah, and Iran, a state that's devoted to torpedoing the peace process." For his part, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer noted that the president endorses Israel's decision to confine Arafat to Ramallah. Even the State Department's customary denunciations of Israeli "excesses" have been silenced. Finally, in his memorable State of the Union address, the president identified Israel's enemies as America's own.

And, having blurred the line between the two countries' interests, Bush has created precedents and expectations that will likely shape America's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for years to come. Precedents, because until recently his administration was still distinguishing between terrorism based on "political issues" (i.e., anti-Israeli terror) and terrorism that sought to "destroy societies" (i.e., anti-American terror). Expectations, because having defined the threat to the Jewish state as malignant, the president can no more opt for equivocal action in Israel's defense than he can in defending the United States against the "axis of evil." To be sure, Foggy Bottom still hasn't gotten the message. Last week Powell advised Sharon to avoid "provocations" and be "constrained." But, try as he may, Israel policy no longer rests with the State Department. It's in safer hands now. ■



DAVID SUTER

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Gray Davis and the rise of the staffer mentality.

Foreign Aide

By FRANKLIN FOER

GRAY DAVIS IS facing a tough year. His reelection, once deemed near certain given California's overwhelming Democratic tilt, has been thrown into question by an energy crisis and a moderate, well-known, well-funded Republican challenger. And considering the boon that a GOP victory in the Golden State would represent for the national party, expect the White House and the Republican National Committee to mount an all-out effort—à la the demonization of Tom Daschle—to savage Davis's reputation.

But what's more surprising is that Democrats haven't really rallied around their man in his moment of need. For many liberals, Davis embodies the corporate centrism that has hijacked the party since the Clinton era. "[A] minimalist governor in a state, and at a time, of maximalist needs and opportunities," decreed *American Prospect* Executive Editor Harold Meyerson. "I fear that there's no telling how far right he'd go," says liberal State Senator John Vasconcellos. The critics are correct that Davis represents a troubling trend, but that trend isn't ideological. Davis's scripted, timid, money-driven brand of politics isn't a function of strongly held beliefs—when circumstances warrant, he just as easily shifts left. It's a function of his background. Davis represents the apotheosis of a new political breed that crosses ideological lines: the staffer-turned-politician.

Once upon a time, the idea that working on a politician's staff constituted a useful apprenticeship for elective office would have been difficult to imagine. As recently as the 1950s, even top aides were little more than glorified executive assistants. "Early on, there was no such thing as staffers. Congressmen had clerks," says American University political scientist Susan Hammond. "And, in fact, their jobs were largely clerical." The real business of electioneering was left largely to party and machine operatives. When candidates needed money, they didn't spend hours schmoozing with lobbyists at cocktail parties; they asked party leaders like Sam Rayburn and Tom Pendergast to open their coffers. And when they ran for reelection, they didn't take six months off to campaign; they relied on their patrons to do the hard work for them. The system may have been undemocratic and corrupt, but it served both sides well. The big-city bosses and state party chairmen got control over patronage and other parochial concerns. The legislators had time to spend on broader issues and fewer concerns about the immediate electoral implications of the votes they cast.

Thanks to campaign reforms and fractious intramural spats over ideology, the parties and machines began to weaken and collapse in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, the expanding welfare state meant politicians needed greater expertise in a broader range of policy areas. For any individual pol, therefore, the demands of both governing and campaigning dramatically increased. Legislators responded by hiring more staff—in 1961 the average congressional office housed six aides; today it houses 18. The staffers both picked up the political slack left by the machines' demise—enforcing message discipline, crafting images, raising money—and tracked an increasingly complex and diverse set of policy debates. The result was that, to a greater and greater extent, the business of governance and the business of campaigning were conducted from the same offices, often by the same people.

And since staffers ran this new system, it's little wonder that they soon began seeking office themselves. In 1960, 15 members of Congress had staff jobs on their resumés. Today 131 do, including both Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (former legislative assistant for Senator James Abourezk) and Minority Leader Trent Lott (former administrative assistant for Representative William Colmer). Former staffers have helped usher in the scripted, process-driven, poll-obsessed political style that today defines American politics. And no one personifies this style better than Jerry Brown's old chief of staff, Gray Davis.

THE POLITICAL APPRENTICESHIP of Gray Davis began in 1973. Returning from Vietnam, where he had repaired radar, he set out on the partner path at a five-name Los Angeles law firm. But he couldn't shake the memory of watching poor and black soldiers fight and die in disproportionate numbers half a world away. "That struck me as totally unfair," he told one reporter. Guided by this burst of conscience, he steered away from his parents' country-club Republicanism, quitting his comfortable job to volunteer his services to Tom Bradley's insurgent campaign against law-and-order Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty.

But if his choice of the black, liberal Bradley bespoke Davis's idealism, his particular duties on the campaign suggested a nascent streak of political realism. Under the tutelage of the financier Max Palevsky, Davis became the campaign's finance director, mining Palevsky's substantial Rolodex for donations. Following Bradley's 1973 victory, Davis mounted his own campaign for state treasurer—a remarkably ambitious goal for a 31-year-old with a slight resumé. Davis was trounced in the primary, but the cam-

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paign brought him into contact with his party's gubernatorial candidate, Jerry Brown, and he quickly returned to the familiar role of campaign aide. Arriving just after Brown's primary victory, Davis didn't initially crack the inner circle—a realm reserved for far-out thinkers like the French filmmaker Jacques Barzhagi and *Small Is Beautiful* author E. F. Schumacher. But Brown understood that, given his well-earned reputation for flakiness, he needed an anal-retentive counterweight. And so, upon his election, Governor Moonbeam tapped Davis to be his chief of staff.

Though Davis was certainly more fastidious and less bohemian than his beret-wearing colleagues in the governor's office, he wasn't any less committed to social change. He proposed a progressive pay structure for his staff, "to provide some economic assistance to the lower-paid employees in the office who don't get the recognition that some of the others of us do." To drive the point home, he took a 7 percent pay cut himself. Davis also exhibited a candor that might surprise people more familiar with his current political demeanor. In a mid-'70s conversation with the journalist Orville Schell that he now surely regrets, Davis mused on the record about going to see the skin flick *Deep Throat* after a disastrous press conference. "In those days, Gray was human," says the writer Joel Kotkin, who used to drink whiskey with him at a Sacramento watering hole called The Broiler.

But spontaneity and idealism were not part of Davis's job description under Brown; micromanagement and cynicism were. "His job was to make the trains run on time," says "Crossfire" co-host Bill Press, a former Brown policy adviser. "Jerry knew he needed someone like Gray to handle the neglected details." Davis set the governor's schedule, placated miffed legislators ("Gray has to eat shit every day," a staffer told Jerry Brown's biographer Robert Pack), and vetted memos and press releases for gaffes—all the while trying to prevent Brown's cadre of pseudo-intellectual visionaries from distracting the governor. "He was the wet rag of the staff," remembers one Brown aide. "It was clearly frustrating for him that he couldn't assert more control on an operation that was always flying off the handle." Nor was he universally popular with his colleagues on the governor's staff, many of whom mocked him as a tight-ass behind his back.

BUT WHILE BROWN and his bull-session buddies daydreamed about colonies on the moon and genetically engineered tomatoes, Davis dealt with the administration's political survival. When business lobbies threatened to finance a Republican challenger in 1978, Davis called to reassure them that Brown wasn't a socialist. He encouraged Brown to block a proposed tax rebate that would have disproportionately benefited low-income workers, arguing that the state couldn't afford it.

More than most of his contemporaries, Davis understood the political zeitgeist. Describing the growing importance of television in Joel Kotkin and Paul Grabowicz's 1982 book *California, Inc.*, Davis enthused, "[P]eople really care about who is Suzanne Somers's favorite governor.... Who will Charlie's Angels endorse for President? That question might well be a serious one." Indeed, it was Davis who skillfully packaged Brown as the populist outsider the post-Watergate era demanded. Taking Davis's advice, Brown ditched his limousine for a blue Plymouth. And it was Davis who broadcast the fact that Brown slept on a mattress in a small apartment rather than living it up in the governor's mansion. "He was very sophisticated about modern campaigning. He understood how to handle TV and image," remembers Bill Boyarsky, a veteran *Los Angeles Times* correspondent who covered the Brown era.

Even as Davis was managing Brown's image and reputation, he was using his post to cultivate his own. Although he had a press secretary next door, Davis took calls from the *Los Angeles Times* himself. According to the *Times*, he'd call reporters back as many as four or five times, constantly editing and reediting his quotes, even down to the placement of punctuation. And when stories didn't quote him by name, he'd raise hell: "Since when is my name spelled a-i-d-e?" he once fumed. It worked. "Gray became a ubiquitous figure. He was always in front of the cameras," says University of Southern California political scientist Sherry Bebitch Jeffe. "The joke was that Gray was the governor."

ALMOST AS SOON as the Brown era closed in 1982, Davis set about making that joke a reality. First he did a four-year stint in the state assembly, where he won national acclaim for conceiving the idea of placing photos of missing children on milk cartons. (Davis managed to milk this for all its self-promotional worth: Missing-children billboards across the state also prominently featured his own name.) In 1986 he ascended to the office of state controller and, in 1994, to lieutenant governor. Along the way, he built the most extensive fund-raising network the state had ever seen.

And, in 1998, he finally achieved his goal. "It's taken me twenty-three years to traverse the fifteen feet from the chief of staff's desk to the governor's desk," he joked. But his mind-set hasn't made the move at all. Unhindered by a flaky boss or resentful colleagues, he's governed the state like the ultimate political staffer, with control over the smallest details. Davis personally approves nearly every press release to leave his office. Internal memos, he insists, must never waste expensive official letterhead. If anonymous leaks from ex-staffers appear in the press, Davis hunts down the perpetrators himself. ("He smells them out," says Democratic consultant William Bradley.) And Davis has tried to interview personally hundreds of administration appointees, including mid-level ones. This penchant for micromanagement may be one reason that, three years into his administration, Davis had 87 judicial posts left to fill.

Whereas Brown favored near-endless internal debate, Davis stifles the slightest dissent. "Nobody has their own agenda. There's only one agenda. It's Gray Davis' agenda," Davis told his Cabinet in the early days of his administration. When his environmental chief, Mary Nichols, discussed withdrawing a court brief filed by former Governor Pete Wilson in an obscure lawsuit over water rights, Davis

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dressed her down as the Cabinet filed out of a meeting. He later told reporters, "Their job is to think like I think." Nor is this view limited to members of Davis's own administration. He once blustered that the legislature's "job is to implement my vision." On another occasion he suggested that his judicial appointees should resign if their rulings contradicted his policies. "My appointees should reflect my views. They're not there to be independent agents."

BUT IF THERE'S an activity in which Davis most betrays his staffer background, it's fund-raising. For most politicians, raising money is an unpleasant necessity; for Davis, it's an obsession. According to adviser Garry South, in campaign mode Davis has spent as many as twelve hours per day in pursuit of donors. When he visited ground zero last October, he tacked fund-raisers onto the trip. At the end of the 2000 legislative session, when hundreds of bills waited on his desk to be signed, a TV cameraman caught the governor sneaking through the bushes to avoid cameras staked out in front of a Sacramento fund-raiser's home. During one two-week period in December, Davis took in an average of $159,000 per day in contributions. (By contrast, New York Governor George Pataki, who also faces a tough reelection, last year averaged $26,000 per day.) Davis's $39.5 million war chest earned $900,000 in interest during the first six months of 2001—almost enough to finance an entire congressional campaign.

And while Bill Clinton's presidency may have popularized the "permanent campaign," Gray Davis's governorship has perfected it. No adviser wields greater influence over Davis's policies than South, his chief political strategist. "As far as I can tell, he's really Gray's only adviser," one Democratic consultant says of South. The result is policy gimmickry that would make Dick Morris blush. Because Wilson profited from a backlash against crime, Davis has staked out an ultra-hard line on the issue, at one point declaring Singapore, where first-time drug offenses routinely merit hangings, "a good starting point in terms of law and order." The state appeals court has reprimanded Davis for exceeding his authority by intervening to prevent the parole of 40 prisoners. When the state legislature, influenced by mounting evidence on the inefficacy of "three strikes and you're out" laws, voted to study the impact of California's version, Davis opposed it. And when legislators of both parties unanimously agreed to eliminate mandatory expulsions for elementary school students carrying weapons or toy guns to school, Davis vetoed the bill.

In 1998, after polls showed education to be the issue foremost in the mind of the electorate, Davis made it his "first, second, and third priority" and convened a special session of the legislature to pass his education agenda. There was only one problem: He barely had any education agenda. Even teachers opposed his "crown jewel" initiative exempting them from state income taxes. (Teachers feared that Davis's proposal would foster popular resentment toward them, which in fact it did.) Ultimately, Davis scaled back his proposal to a $1,500 tax credit. When the measure passed, Davis aides lined the path from the governor's office to the press conference with children plucked out of tours of the state capitol. "Great stage managing," says Kotkin, "but without any ambition."

A YEAR OR SO ago, California was booming, and Davis and his hypercautious, hypercalculated political style seemed unstoppable. Al Gore considered him for the second spot on the Democratic ticket. Newspaper articles frequently mentioned him as a "potential presidential contender." But then something funny happened: Crisis hit. First, Silicon Valley tanked. Then came the state's energy crisis. Unsurprisingly, Davis has reacted more aggressively to the politics of the blackouts than to the blackouts themselves—importing Gore's chief flacks, Chris Lehane and Mark Fabiani, to help spin the problem his way. Davis even outwitted Karl Rove, admonishing George W. Bush to his face at a joint press conference last June. Before Enron became a household name, Davis was blaming the crisis on Texas "energy cowboys," "snakes," and "gougers." But, his shrewd p.r. strategy notwithstanding, Davis—afraid of demanding painful sacrifices from either the electorate or the electric companies—took months to propose a remedy. And his solution failed miserably. Locking the state into a lengthy, overpriced contract with Pacific Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison, and other power producers, he did nothing to address the underlying problem of long-term shortages. What's more, his deal could send the state deeper into debt.

Then, in early November, Davis tried to get out in front of the terrorism issue. An FBI memo warning of "uncorroborated information" about attacks on unspecified bridges quickly morphed into a grandstanding gubernatorial announcement about "credible" evidence of impending strikes on four named targets. In his State of the State address, Davis boasted shamelessly that "[n]o state has done more than California to protect its citizens and vital assets since the terrorist attacks." Last November *Los Angeles Times* writer Mark Z. Barabak blasted Davis's response to September 11 as "driven more by politics than by principle."

By January 2002 Davis's approval rating was at 39 percent, down from 60 percent one year before. And, as of last week, he trails his likely Republican opponent, former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan, by seven points. The irony is rich. Riordan is, in many ways, the anti-staffer. He spent most of his life outside politics, winning his first election, as mayor of Los Angeles, at age 63. A sort of cross between John McCain and Paul O'Neill, Riordan is prone to statements like "Gosh, I don't have a clue how to answer that." And he often seems to make up his highly unorthodox political positions—support for gay civil union, for instance—as he goes along. But Riordan's somewhat bumbling style proved popular in Los Angeles because it underscored his authenticity and his independence. And it sets Davis's bloodless maneuvering in stark relief. Post-9/11, earnestness is in. At the very moment Davis and his fellow staffer-politicians have reached the peak of their power, the electorate, it seems, finally craves more. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Looking Two Ways

THE DOSSIERS OF film directors can make melancholy reading. In many instances, a director's record is a history of necessities, the need to take available work, rather than a series of personal choices. The oldest problem in this expensive art is the marriage of art and capital in a way that will produce interesting progeny. The latter-day growth of the dowry—the capital needs for filming—tips the balance against the groom. If he wants the dowry, he has to take the proffered bride, loved or not, and do the best he can.

Consider Fred Schepisi (pronounced "Skepsy"). Born in Melbourne in 1939, he was first headed for the Catholic Church and spent two years in a seminary. This experience seeded his first film work, a short called *The Priest* (1973), based on a Thomas Keneally story about a nun who was reconsidering her vows, and a feature called *The Devil's Playground* (1976), about emotional seethings amidst young seminarians. From these beginnings, clearly in some measure an autobiographical outburst, Schepisi made a giant leap into a large and tragic story about another kind of repression that ultimately burst out. *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (1978), a gorgeous evocation of Australian forests and countryside, was the epic of an aborigine who took as much indignity and rebuff from white people as he could endure and ultimately exploded, knowing quite well that it would cost him his life. (This film, too, was made from a novel by Keneally, eventual author of *Schindler's List*.)

The dramatic size of *Jimmie Blacksmith* and its formidable passion made Schepisi a world figure. Translation: he got offers from America and Britain. But this should not be read as bald "sell-out." These offers could not invite him to continue as an artist of Australian texture, but his career is not a simplistic toboggan ride from truth to falsehood. None of Schepisi's subsequent pictures were his in the way that the first two were, but some of them were vehicles for his talent.

Barbarosa was an exceptional Western; *Iceman* was an exceptional science-fiction story; *Plenty*, made from David Hare's play about postwar Britain, gave Meryl Streep one of her best roles. Steve Martin got *his* best role in *Roxanne*, about a modern Cyrano. For *A Cry in the Dark* Schepisi returned to Australia, taking Meryl Streep with him to play a woman accused of murdering her baby, but it was a sort of Sunday-supplement film. *The Russia House* got some chill out of a Le Carré thriller; *Mr. Baseball* (a title that seems out of place) presented Tom Selleck as a ballplayer traded to Japan. *Six Degrees of Separation* tried to give cogency to John Guare's whimsical play about a black impostor. *I.Q.*, which I wish I could omit, had Albert Einstein as a subsidiary in a romance. *Fierce Creatures* was an English farce about a zoo. (Just look again at that last sentence.)

This retrospect of Schepisi, which at least shows the director struggling and with some victories, was occasioned by his latest, **Last Orders** (Sony Pictures Classics)—because this film is in itself a work of retrospection. In this screenplay, adapted by Schepisi from a novel by Graham Swift, four aging London drinking pals are about to dispose of the ashes of a recently deceased mate according to his wishes. (For non-Anglophiles: the title is a play on words. "Last orders" is a British barman's call for the patrons' last drinks before he closes up.) The screenplay follows their adventures en route to Margate, where the ashes are to be scattered in the sea, and braids this story with flashbacks of the lives of all five of them, together with corollary scenes about the private doings of the quintet.

Last Orders is low-grade plot engineering but is endurable because we wait for some revelation that will justify the mechanics. But nothing of the kind comes our way. We get quarrels, naturally; we get family secrets revealed; we get some troweled-on pathos with the mentally impaired daughter of the deceased. But none of these things compensate us for the trite structure, or for the acting we have to endure.

There's so much of it, and it all comes from veterans who are grabbing this chance to flash their histrionic campaign ribbons. The least of them is Ray Winstone, notable only since the recent *Sexy Beast*. But the others! Bob Hoskins, the heaviest breather of the lot; Tom Courtenay, the long-distance runner still trying to run; David Hemmings, once the spry young photographer in *Blowup*, now rejoicing in his non-spryness; and Michael Caine (as the deceased, seen in flashbacks), once one of the best screen actors, who took a five-year break in the mid-1990s and came back without his talent. The only creditable acting comes from Helen Mirren, as Caine's wife and widow. Mirren grows increasingly endearing as she ages. (I couldn't help recalling that the first time I saw Mirren she was nude, diving into the Australian sea in *Age of Consent* thirty-three years ago.)

But the aging of actors is different from that of directors. Actors are obviously very much the servants of their bodies, therefore of age, and can do only what their bodies permit. Besides, actors, particularly males, often try to make a virtue of their aging, flaunting it, cajoling us to remember their past and thus to applaud them for their gumption.

Directors have neither the physical exigency of the actor nor the same sort of possible flaunting. All through *Last Orders*, I thought about Schepisi, not presuming to pity him but wondering how he felt. Probably, given the facts of film life, he was glad to be exercising his craft, which he does adequately enough if not remarkably. But the man who made *Jimmie Blacksmith* and some of those other Schepisi films must have known what he was doing here. Anyway, I hope that the title of this picture bodes nothing.

After this retrospect, a look forward. A *New York Times* article by Dave Kehr titled "Anime, Japanese Cinema's Second Golden Age" sent me to see my first anime film, **Metropolis** (TriStar). Anime is a type of animation that has been developed in Japan with all kinds of computer ingenuity. It now accounts for sixty percent of Japanese film production, with no sign of future slowdown.

As Philip French once said, one swallow doesn't make a *summa*. One sample of anime is slim ground for generalization, but I can at least report on the single experience. The story was pure comic-book stuff, as was promised, but it was poor comic-book stuff—confusing and unmoving. The artwork presented the main figures in fairly familiar style, but the backgrounds were chockablock and busy, something like the present-day

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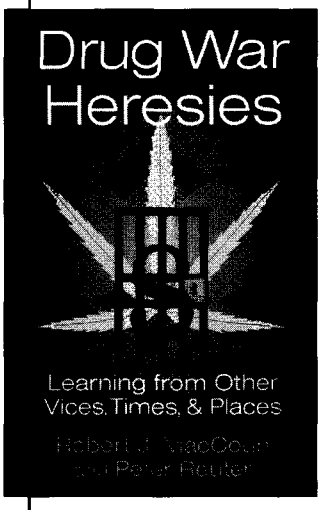

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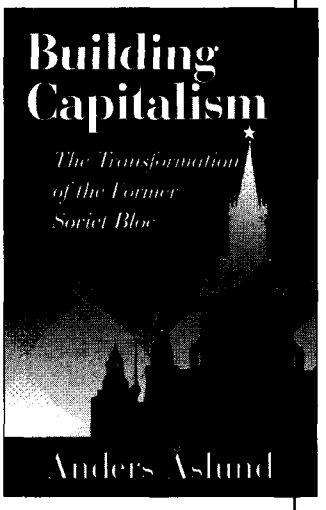

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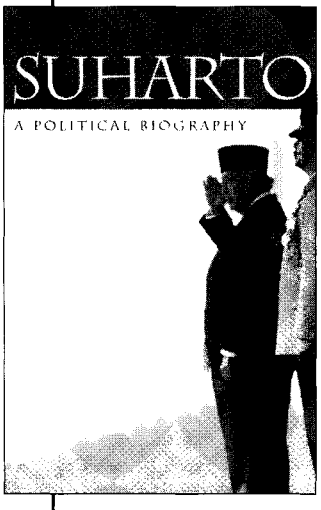

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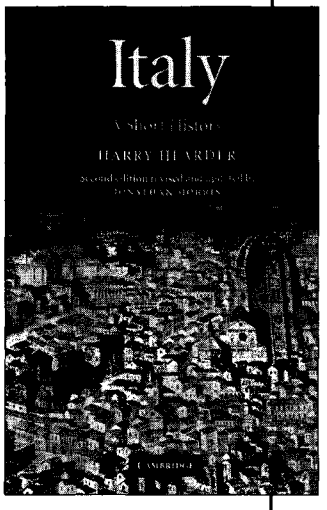

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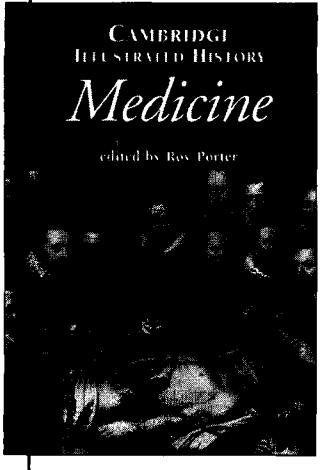

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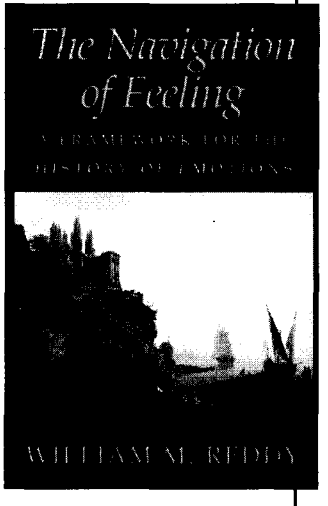

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screens of our television news shows. The music strained for hip internationalism. The most surprising aspect was that none of the characters—not one—was Asian, though they all spoke Japanese accompanied by English subtitles. The blonde, pert-nosed heroine, the Prince Valiant hero, and all the others proclaimed that this was a film made for export sales. The "golden" in Kehr's title surely was literal.

But that's not the whole story. These films, I've read, are also madly successful in Japan. On my one visit to that country, pre-anime, I saw how absorbed the public was with American pop culture, including pop films. Now they apparently respond the same way to domestic pictures made with American characters. I can't imagine the reverse in any Western country. ■

Jennifer Homans on Dance

Steps, Steps, Steps

I.

THE BALLET DANCERS of today are amazing. They can turn, jump, and lift their legs higher, better, farther, faster, and more than ever before. Many of the most accomplished of them now dance with American Ballet Theatre, and their achievements were on show during the company's recent season at City Center in New York. ABT has always been known for its roster of stars, but today even its lowliest ranks are thick with talented dancers who regularly up the ante with dizzying displays of technical prowess.

The dancers are great. Why, then, was the season so dull? The company offered a series of mixed bills that included classical pas de deux and works by twentieth-century choreographers. Night after night we watched Paloma Herrera, Julie Kent, Nina Ananiashvili, Maxim Belotserkovsky, Jose Manuel Carreño, Angel Corella, Ethan Stiefel, and many others pour on the tours, leaps, and throws. The performers were energetic, technically impeccable, and eager to please. The audience cheered them on and shouted bravos. But all of this effort only made the truth more glaring: we were wowed, but rarely moved; impressed, but almost never inspired. Where was the edge, the exhilaration, the sense of having been a part of something larger than a masterful pirouette? Has ballet been reduced to a series of sensational athletic moves, a gymnastics of turns, jumps, and splits—and are audiences content to be cheerleaders? Are we so seduced by pyrotechnics that we have forgotten that ballet might also offer something more complex and daring?

That classical ballet in New York is in a state of crisis is not news. Arlene Croce mourned the end of ballet in articles throughout the 1990s, and for years ballet aficionados across the city have been grumbling nostalgically about the good old days when Baryshnikov, Nureyev, Makarova, Gregory, Farrell, McBride, d'Amboise, Tomasson, and the rest sent them home electrified. The current impasse is often attributed to the passing of a great generation of dancers and choreographers: Balanchine, Robbins, Tudor, and Ashton are all dead, and the dancers that they nourished are long gone from the stage. An era has ended, it is said, and we are now waiting—waiting for the next genius to emerge.

But we may wait a long time, for it is not the absence of a genius that ails contemporary ballet. The problem is deeper and far more pervasive: ballet has become a crushingly conservative art form. In the course of the past twenty years, we have watched dancers retreat into tight technical perfection, petrified beauty, and contrived imitations of past glories. We have seen a vibrant, complicated, and playful art form lose its inner life and settle into a glamorous complacency.

The ways we think about ballet make this conservatism seem normal. Ballet is conventionally presented as the prototypically aristocratic art. After all, it emerged in the French and Italian courts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and was used by kings and courtiers to assert social hierarchies and to display their own prestige in fantastic spectacles of affluence and power. Dancers working in the court of Louis XIV famously codified the basic positions and (we are told) laid the groundwork for all that followed. In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (so the story continues), dancers extended their technical range, and court dance developed into what we now recognize as classical ballet, with its jumps, turns, adagio, and point work. In this view, ballet is an evolved elaboration of baroque dance forms: inherently elitist, conservative, and restrained. No wonder we think of it as prestigious, black tie, and unquestionably "uptown."

But this is a serious misreading of the origins and the character of classical ballet. Ballet was born of rebellion, of conflict and radical ideas. It was a rejection and a complete transformation of aristocratic court dance. It did not elaborate the art of kings, but broke with it vigorously and deliberately. It is a modern art, which grew up in the context of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The cultural cauldron that gave us Voltaire, Rousseau, and Chateaubriand, Gluck, Meyerbeer, and Berlioz, Laclos, Hugo, and Gautier, also gave us ballet. If ballet is now in crisis, it is not because we have no "genius" choreographers; it is because we no longer intuit the values that made it a viable and interesting form of human expression for the past two hundred years. And if we are to understand how things at our best ballet companies can go so wrong when they look so right, we must cast a backward glance at the tumultuous career of the art.

II.

THE HIGHEST AND most respected dance form in the late seventeenth century was the *danse noble*, and its most vaunted practitioners performed at the court of Louis XIV. The *danse noble* was court etiquette writ large: its steps were woven through with rules for how a well-bred nobleman might stand, sit, or walk in the presence of others; how he might enter or leave a room, pass a person on the street, offer a greeting, or otherwise assert his place in the social world. A plié was not just a bend of the knees, it was a gesture of humility; and the deeper the bend, the greater the mark of respect. Épaulement was not just a turn of the shoulder, it was also a moment of polite self-effacement. To offer a hand to a woman was not just to invite her to dance, it was also an act of courtship.

The *danse noble* was a revelation of nobility, an abstracted physical representation of cultivation, taste, and hierarchical social relations. Not surprisingly, it privileged men—especially kings. It is no accident that Louis XIV was the most

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admired dancer of his generation. Silk stockings showed off a man's shapely legs, and the best dancers were known to unfold their long, elegant limbs with deliberate and solemn majesty. A *danseur noble* was god-like, composed, and regal. He never jumped or pranced about; such antics were the province of less exalted genres of dance.

Women did not perform at all until the late seventeenth century, and when they did take to the stage, they demurred. A man might embellish a step with leg beats and complicated footwork, but a woman refrained from elaborations. Her tiny feet were barely visible beneath her fashionably long, heavy skirts. Tight corsets and towering headdresses (piled high with jeweled fruits and other accoutrements) made larger movements precarious, if not impossible. But these sartorial complexities were not considered a hindrance. Quite the contrary: the grand architectural shape of her body only enhanced a woman's stature.

When a woman and a man danced together in a pas de deux, they joined hands, faced the audience, and moved in perfect symmetry. The man did not lift, hold, or support the woman. Instead the man and the woman moved together, as if joined by an invisible thread. They might pull away or play off each other, but only in complementary, matching ways. They danced side by side or in mirror image, their steps differing in degree but never in kind. The man deferred respectfully and paid homage with his bravura; the woman accepted his admiration and discreetly lowered her eyes. A pas de deux was a formal display; private feelings might be hinted at, but they were otherwise inappropriate to the form.

WHEN THE *PHILOSOPHES* launched their criticism of culture and society in the eighteenth century, they came down hard on French ballet. Many found it mechanical, dull, and empty. The stylized etiquette of the *danse noble* seemed to them irrelevant and uninteresting. The German critic Sulzer, writing in Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, explained the problem with customary bite. What, he asked, were audiences to make of bizarrely costumed, madly gesticulating dancers with their forced movements? Dance, he complained, was just a series of meaningless steps; it did not "imitate" anything but itself. "Scales," chided Diderot, "are not the same as song." Rousseau was even more dismissive: if this was all that ballet had to offer, he argued, it ought to be banned from opera.

There were calls for reform. Louis Cahusac and Jean-Georges Noverre led the charge, insisting that ballet should rid itself of pomp and circumstance, of plots "solved" by magical effects and *deus ex machina*, of artifice and frilly bows. It should express real human emotions and rationally coherent dramatic situations; it should take on tragedy and not be content with mere *divertissement*. Dance, the reformers suggested, could become a serious art with expressive qualities surpassing those of poetry, prose, and song.

Hitherto dance had generally been performed as part of an opera, since it was thought incapable of telling a story without words: it needed aria and recitative. But now it seemed possible that dance might break free of opera and stand alone. Language, Noverre argued, had become flowery and corrupt, but movement was primitive and transparent, and it would not lie. Movement bypassed the intellectual faculties and pierced straight to the heart. Stories told in pure dance and pantomime set to music would be a new art for a new age: freed from opera and artifice, ballet would use the body to reveal a more "natural" human drama.

In 1760, Noverre published his ideas in a multi-volume treatise called *Lettres sur la Danse et les Arts Imitateurs*. He joined forces with Gluck (whose ideas about opera made them natural collaborators) and corresponded with Voltaire. He created dozens of new ballets, many of them "serious" tragedies. In 1776 he won the coveted position of ballet master at the Paris Opéra, where he staged ballets such as *Jason et Médée* and *Les Horaces*.

For all his forward-looking ideas, however, Noverre was also (like Voltaire) a classicist. He could never bring himself to forsake the *danse noble*. He defended its aristocratic character, insisting that it was as grand and eloquent as history painting or tragedy. The problem with the *danse noble* was only that it was incomplete: it needed pantomime to make it a theatrically convincing art form capable of telling a story and expressing the full range of human emotions.

SUCH HIGH-MINDED DEBATES, however, were not enough for the revolutionaries of 1789, much less the radical men of Year II. They were concerned with the look and the style of the *danse noble* itself. To them, no amount of pantomime or theory could disguise a hateful aristocratic form. Two days before the storming of the Bastille, angry crowds rampaged through the Paris opera house. Subsequent manifestos made the revolutionary agenda clear: ballet was corrupt, indecent, an affront to Spartan republican sensibilities. It had to be abolished or radically transformed.

And so, in effect, it was. Dancers shed their heavy costumes, undid their hair, and jettisoned their high heels. They performed in flat shoes, Grecian tunics, and light, almost transparent materials. They eschewed anything reminiscent of court or aristocratic display. Pageantry, political theater, and folk dances increasingly pushed the *danse noble* aside. In 1792, Pierre Gardel, the ballet master at the Paris Opéra during (and after) the Revolution, produced a stage version of *La Marseillaise* called *L'Offrande à la Liberté*. *L'Offrande* later became part of the Festival of Reason, and Gardel went on to choreograph dances in other productions commemorating revolutionary moments, with titles such as *Sans Culotide* (a staging of the *Fête de la Réunion du 10 Août*, 1793) and *Le Triomphe de la République*. In these works, groups of peasants, workers, soldiers, women, and children, arranged by sex, age, profession, or geographic origin, predominated. They gathered, marched, and danced the carmagnole. The hierarchical spatial arrangements that had characterized court spectacle were swept away, and *le peuple* flooded in.

Clusters of young women in simple white dresses and flower wreaths were especially popular actors in these political dramas: they represented republican virtue, simplicity, and devotion. Choreographers had always been interested in nymphs, sylphs, and the like, but these girls were different: they were no longer pretty ornaments in a gilded spectacle, they were instead groups animated by a common dramatic purpose and character. In ballets for years to come, groups of women would play an important role in offsetting the claims of individuals. They were united, cohesive, and strong-willed. At their most extreme, Noverre later noted, they could be like an infantry regiment, "ordered, exact, and subordinate." They were the first modern corps de ballet, and the Revolution's most enduring legacy to dance.

NAPOLEON'S TASTE FOR grandeur looked as if it might open the way for a return of the *danse noble*, but contemporary dancers such as François Decombe, who perfected the *danse noble* style, were less and less sought after. Instead male dancing veered in a different direction, exemplified by an enormously popular *demi-caractère* dancer named Auguste Vestris. Vestris could leap, spin, and extend his body as no one before him, and he developed a style that was powerful, athletic, and exaggerated. Following his lead, male dancers such as Antoine Paul (and later Jules Perrot) turned out their legs one hundred eighty degrees, lifted them hip-height,

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raised their arms, whipped through multiple turns, and threaded steps into combinations that we use to this day.

When Vestris retired in 1816, he became a celebrated teacher, and passed his "method" on to another generation of dancers. Unpublished notes left by one of his students, August Bournonville (who studied with Vestris in the 1820s), show a rigorous new system of training premised on rational physical principles: it began with small, simple steps and moved systematically to more complex and demanding exercises. Etiquette had all but dropped from the equation.

These male dancers were aesthetically radical. They broke the mold of the *danse noble* and violated everything it stood for. They were brash and unrestrained. Critics were exasperated by their crass manners and their abandonment of traditional grace, balance, and precision. Writing in 1806, a critic in the *Journal des Débats* set the tone: "We must condemn ambitious, audacious pirouettes which end in jumps and bring the dancer crashing to the floor off balance and against the music; we must mock floppy, puppet-like extensions, which are better left to monkeys; they are an affront to artistic dignity and good taste."

The athletic character of the emerging technique was evidence that the more gymnastic movements of the popular boulevard theaters had taken hold. But more significantly, it was also a pointed comment on aristocratic style. Auguste Vestris and his followers forced and distorted the fine lines of the *danse noble* to the point of caricature; their movements were a flagrant insult to elegance and grandeur. Their style was emphatically ignoble. Indeed, it was a form of derision and mockery.

It was also modern ballet: we would recognize these men. Their steps, their training, and their geometrically configured movements are our own. They are the "fathers" of ballet as we know it. What is familiar to us, however, was disturbing and strange in its original context, and these athletic dancers found themselves in an awkward position. By ridiculing the *danse noble*, they also undermined their own stature. The *danseur* was no longer a clear symbol of strength, power, and nobility. Instead he was an ambiguous, dandy-like figure, whose forced, extreme technique was a parody of ancien régime elegance.

The compromised position of the male dancer generated a crisis in the art. The *danse noble* had been the foundation of ballet; without it, there was no guarantee that the tradition would hold. Contemporaries worried that dancers had sold out to sensationalism and boulevard antics. "I fear," a professor of dance lamented in 1825, "that the new school will mean the total ruin of true dance." Women mostly held their own by taking the high road of drama and emphasizing their skills as actresses, but the men seemed to be racing toward an ever more distorted *demi-caractère* style. Pierre Gardel and Louis Milon, ballet masters at the Opéra, mounted a rear-guard action to save the *danse noble*, but by the mid-1820s it was clear that they had only managed to delay its inevitable decline. The problem persisted: with fewer and fewer distinguished male dancers practiced in the old style, could ballet continue to rank as a fine art—or would it finally dead-end in gymnastics, more fitting to the fairground than the opera house?

Marie Taglioni in *La Sylphide*, 1832

In 1827, MARIE TAGLIONI made her debut at the Paris Opéra and put an end to these vexing questions. People were awestruck by her performances, and she quickly became an international star. What did Taglioni do that was so extraordinary? She feminized ballet and shifted its structural axis. Ballet would no longer be centered on the public image of noblemen and kings: henceforth it would be about women. It would no longer display social relations, but paint a landscape of inner feelings and secret desires. It would not flaunt strength, but turn it to illusion. Taglioni galvanized the ailing tradition and re-made it in her own image. For the next one hundred fifty years, the idea of the ballerina—Taglioni's ballerina—would define ballet.

As a ballerina, Taglioni was not sui generis; she built her dancing on the tradition that was bequeathed to her. She mastered the restrained, rigorous, and aristocratic style of the *danse noble*, and trained herself to rival any man in power and endurance. She took on the new physical geometry that pried the body open at the hips, lengthened lines, and embraced elevation. Crucially, though, she was careful to avoid multiple turns and to cloak her formidable technique in a soft, feminine style. She inveighed against un-ladylike dancers who made their skirts fly up and ogled men in the gallery.

Taglioni never displayed her strength, but made it the hidden source of otherworldly femininity. She rose on her points and skimmed across the floor. She did not jump, but appeared rather to float up to the clouds. Her elevation had a moral dimension: she was so airy that she seemed chaste, and almost metaphysical. One critic rhapsodized in 1831 that she had "Christianized dance." In her lexicon, ironclad strength was a condition of feminine grace, and both were attributes of high art.

But Taglioni's femininity was a bundle of contradictions. If she was modest, simple, and pure, she was also fraught with yearning. Taglioni infused her movement with a vague, aching desire for love and life. This was most famously evident in *La Sylphide* in 1832, the ballet choreographed for her by her father, Filippo Taglioni. The ballet opens with James asleep in a chair on the day of his

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marriage to Elfie. A sylphide (Taglioni) kneels quietly at the foot of the chair. James dreams and Taglioni dances. He sees this delicate, winged creature of the air flitting across the stage. She is free, boundless, and impulsive. When he wakes, she does not disappear, but continues to dance. He loves her, but he cannot have her—she evades his every grasp. She loves him too and will die if he marries another. Her only hope is to make him leave Elfie (the village, marriage, society) and follow her into the woods. She succeeds: he gives up everything and goes. But she remains elusive—running, leaping away, disappearing and reappearing like the poetic phantom that she is. James finally captures her by wrapping a scarf around her shoulders; she perishes instantly. Without freedom, she cannot survive.

BUT HER FREEDOM was never absolute. Part of Taglioni's genius was her ability to use the strictures of classical technique to show the relationship between freedom and limits in her own body. She contained and concentrated the virtuosity that was so problematic in her male counterparts. No matter how high she jumped or how long she perched on her toe, she always stayed within the perimeter of classical positions. Contemporary lithographs and portraits often show Taglioni poised in a low arabesque; she balances on an exquisitely arched foot, with her other leg stretched out behind and an arm reaching poignantly forward. It is an emblematic moment: we feel her body pulled in two directions. She wants to go, but her leg and her arm counteract each other, and instead she balances perfectly on one foot, caught between fleeting desires. The impulse is to fly, but the symmetry of the position will not allow it. The boundaries of classical technique are clear, which made it all the more interesting when she strained to escape them.

To create this kind of internal physical dynamic, Taglioni had to have an extraordinarily strong body. Her training regime was grueling, even by today's standards. She worked for six hours daily: two hours on exercises to build strength and flexibility, two hours on adagio movements and balances, and two hours on jumps. Lithographs and drawings show her calves and thighs thick with heavy muscle. Here was a woman whose body was all power, weight, and manly proportions, but who moved in ways so exquisitely refined that she seemed the epitome of angelic femininity. Material and spiritual; earth and air; masculine and feminine: big ideas and fierce oppositions ran through her body. Audiences felt this,

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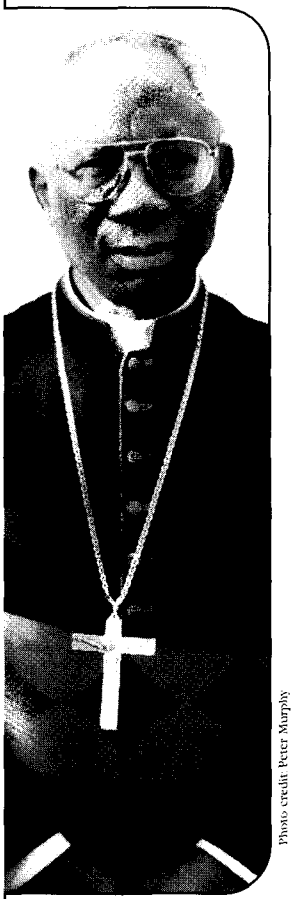

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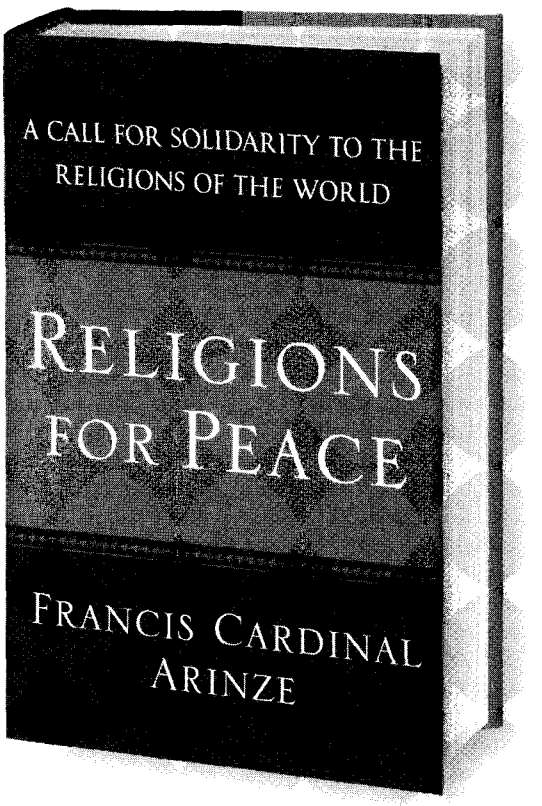

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and marveled at her ability to contain and transcend them.

With the coming of Taglioni, the fate of the male dancer was sealed. As her reputation soared, men were increasingly marginalized. By the 1830s many critics felt that the male dancer cut such a ridiculous figure that he ought to be banned from the stage. Jules Janin, an ardent "Taglionist" and among the most outspoken critics of male dancers, proclaimed in 1832, "Under no circumstances do I recognize a man's right to dance in public." At best, the male dancer might be a useful partner. He could help the ballerina in her pursuit of the ideal. He could lift, hold, or balance her in her pursuit of the unattainable. He could be a foil to her emotions. In the pas de deux of the 1830s, men and women no longer danced side by side, in symmetrical perfection. Instead the woman draped herself over her partner, entwined her body with his, pulled and pushed against him.

So the mold of modern ballet was set. The ballerina was its protagonist, and the male *danseur* was destined to live in her shadow, in spite of (or because of) his spectacular tricks. The tensions inscribed in Taglioni's dancing have characterized ballet ever since: she was mysterious, powerful, and free, but also constrained, yearning, and restless; she was physically strong but aesthetically ethereal; sensual but chaste; charming but remote. Deeply individualistic and independent, she cherished private impulses and eschewed social obligation.

These oppositions ran through the ballerina's body and made ballet dynamic, complicated, and alive. Classical choreography then and since has typically built on the image of the ballerina to forge visual, musical, and physical tensions between a central woman and a lover, a corps de ballet, villagers, princes, or other representatives of social cohesion. These ideas are built into the technique and the ethos of classical ballet; they are not rigid prescriptions but flexible, loosely spun qualities that give ballet its aesthetic identity. Petipa, Balanchine, Ashton, even Tudor and Robbins upheld these tenets. They pushed the limits, but remained largely committed to this nineteenth-century vision.

III.

Over the past twenty years, this vision has slowly faded, and ballet today is a shadow of its former self. Which is not to say that it is necessarily doomed to extinction. To watch American Ballet Theatre this season was to see the "old" idea of ballet in the final stages of decline; but it was also to be reminded that ballet is a radical art, and may yet renew itself from within.

For a start, there is the matter of the ballerinas. ABT is a company of magnificently trained dancers, and one would expect to find scintillating ballerinas; but this season there was none. Not a single one. Consider Susan Jaffe, one of ABT's most senior dancers. When she begins a variation or pas de deux, she invariably crooks her head slightly, lingers, and then begins to emote. What follows is dramatic affect masquerading as "interpretation." She bends a bit too far, flourishes too grandly, accents the music too deliberately. Her second act of *Swan Lake* is a parody of lyricism. Not a single phrasing rings true, honest, or genuine.

It is not that Jaffe is not trying. Indeed, she is determined to "make something" of her roles and not just pummel her way through the steps. This is what made her dancing seem so promising fifteen years ago. But now that she is a seasoned performer, it is clear that she has learned little about how to infuse movement with meaning. She has become a strange, affected creature: a pink music-box dancer. Misty-eyed, syrupy, and sentimental, she is not a ballerina, she is a cliché.

Julie Kent and Paloma Herrera have a different problem. They are lovely, lovely, lovely—and utterly empty-headed. Or so it seems from watching them move. They have smoothed out the tensions that made ballerinas from Taglioni to Ulanova to Farrell so interesting: there is not a hint of mystery, desire, or power; not a glimmer of complexity; not a moment even of playfulness. Instead, all is ease and glassy perfection. Indeed, their technique is so seamless and their bodies so flexible that it is hard to see what they are doing. Every effort and edge is hidden, tucked in, sewn up with the threads of mastery. Great ballerinas always show us the character of their bodies: we see the particular ways that their legs straighten, backs bend, wrists flex. We get to know their difficulties as well as their strengths. This is not idiosyncrasy; it is personality. But here there is none. Kent and Herrera have sealed themselves tight into their bodies. We have no access to anything but the bows and ribbons of a pretty exterior.

Nina Ananiashvili and Irina Dvorovenko have more sophistication and weight, but they seem to have fallen prey to the same obsessions. In previous seasons, Ananiashvili has danced *Giselle* to great effect, but faced with the more exacting demands of *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, she smiles too hard and works overtime to gloss over the slightest slip or imperfection. And with perfection comes fear: when Ananiashvili or Dvorovenko or Herrera approaches a difficult balance or turn, we can see it coming. But bright eyes and feigned ease cannot disguise the fact that every muscle is trained to avert a dreaded misstep. And then comes the relief: Bravo! She did it! She balanced for ten whole seconds! Mind you, there *is* something gripping about watching Herrera conquer the female variation in *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*. Her performance is a showstopper; but that is all it is. She has no greater ambition, no deeper goal. Her steps are just steps.

This narrow-minded approach is fatal to the classical pas de deux. A complicated interaction between a man and a woman is reduced to a simple exercise in trust: the ballerina agrees to relinquish a bit of her precious control on condition that the man save her from any lopsided turns, tottering balances, or other embarrassing lapses. This arrangement works plausibly well in a simple romantic dance such as the White Swan pas de deux from *Swan Lake*. And so we saw Julie Kent lean her full weight into Guillaume Graffin; he enveloped her thin, lithe body and held her tight—really tight. She led, and he followed her every impulse with perfect synchrony. They were flush; a pair of lovers locked in trust.

But trust alone cannot do justice to *Sylvia Pas de Deux*, *Diana and Acteon* or any of the pas de deux from *Symphony in C* or Clark Tippet's *Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1*. Here a fuller emotional palette is needed: wit, passion, disdain, teasing, affection, desire, irony. The ballerina especially must have range: she must carve out her realm, tell us who she is, exhibit a degree of character. Alas, the ABT ballerinas proceed with colorless monotony, as if every ballet were the same.

Is this what it means to be a ballerina? These women do not see their bodies as sensitive instruments trained to respond to music with an intuitive physical intelligence. They never feel the pulse or reveal the inner workings of a variation. They do not even try to pull us into a mysterious, theatrical world of their own making. It seems not to occur to them to turn their difficulties into something interesting. Nor do we ever get the sense that they are enjoying the chase, or even—God forbid!—hamming it up a bit. Fun can lighten a dancer's load and bring the audience into her camp, but these dancers are too serious about perfection to indulge in such pleasures. The ABT ballerinas are so absorbed in workaday pursuits that their dancing is spiritually impover-

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ished. They can do anything, but what do they believe in?

Yet all is not lost. For the ABT men are a force of nature. Gone is the retiring *danseur* as princely partner. Gone is the restrained, Eric Bruhn–style bravura. Gone are the days when Nureyev and Baryshnikov were the exception rather than the rule. Since the early 1990s, ABT has attracted one extraordinary man after another: Belotserkovsky, Carreño, Corella, Graffin, Malakhov, Stiefel, Cornejo, de Luz, Gomes, Molina.

They break every mold: they are too impatient to defer to a ballerina for long; they are too exuberant and youthful to be noble. Their bravura has none of the weight, tradition, and sophistication of Baryshnikov or Bruhn. Instead they are macho, raw, and utterly driven: they do not stop at double tours en l'air, but go for triples; they are not content with quadruple pirouettes, but turn until you have lost count and then stop on a dime. They devour space and tear into steps with rapacious abandon. Their energy is unabashed and exciting. They are refreshingly naïve, and they love to dance. If ballet has a radical edge today, these men are it.

Ethan Stiefel is particularly remarkable in this sense. He is direct, honest, and flush with the physical sensibility so sorely lacking in ABT's principal women. Technically, he can do just about anything, but that is not what makes him so interesting to watch. Stiefel carries his intelligence across his shoulders, which are open and relaxed. His disposition is free and clear, unencumbered by worries, fears, or calculations. He is just there, and we see every impulse, motive, and reaction. He has a sharp instinct for movement and follows it unwaveringly.

And he is not alone. Jose Carreño has a winning freshness. There is nothing jaded about his movement. We have the feeling that he marvels at every step—we see the spiraling architecture of his tour en l'air, and the precise physical motive animating his grand jeté. Malakhov, Gomes, Belotserkovsky, de Luz, and Corella have similar skills. They forage through movement and push fearlessly to the frontier. Sometimes they even fall. Their performances are *live*.

Is the ballerina-centered Taglioni axis of ballet changing at last? Will ballets of the future be "about" men? Some choreographers seem to be experimenting in this direction. *Clear*, a new work by the Australian choreographer Stanton Welch to music by Bach, has a cast of seven men and one woman. The men are bare-chested, with fitted bell-bottom pants.

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Every movement shows, and that is the point: we see the big muscle groups pushing, flexing, propelling the movement. There is a primitive energy to the steps, which thrust sharply and retract; the body rebounds as if to absorb bolts of electricity sent straight to the gut. There is lyricism, too: backs and arms bend, ripple, and flow with the force of whitewater in a duet for Belotserkovsky and Malakhov.

The same is true, in a different key, of Kirk Peterson's *Amazed in Burning Dreams*, set to a score by Philip Glass. (The ballet was originally choreographed for Pacific Northwest Ballet in 1993, and is new to the ABT repertory this season.) Here male virtuosity turns to hard militant purpose. The dancers are so strong, the movement is so relentless, dense, and anti-lyrical, that it is almost uncomfortable to watch. The driving score never lets up, and the men force their way through the music with fierce determination. There are women too, but they look pale and wan in such harsh movements and cannot sustain the vigor. The ballet's melodramatic lighting and contrived themes are also obscure and anyway beside the point. Like *Clear*, the ballet is a creation of its male cast.

Clear and *Amazed* are showcases: well-crafted and engaging, they push the men to their limits. If the male dancer is to re-invigorate ballet, however, he will need even more. Traditional pas de deux and nineteenth-century classics (including the bravura *La Corsaire*) will not help. Nor will Balanchine classics such as *Symphony in C*: these are still a ballerina's world. The ABT men are a new breed, and they cannot be caged in old ballets. Letting them dance their hearts out will always be a good show, but it will not lead to anything more significant. They need to be trained, directed, and turned to purposes bigger (even) than their own prowess.

Robert Hill's *Marimba* takes us in the right direction. Not because it is "about" men (it is not), but simply because it is a fine piece of choreography that uses dancers in strict, interesting ways. The ballet begins by defining limits: sharp lights cut horizontally across the dim, smoky stage, creating a low ceiling that weighs heavy on the dancers. The vibrant tones of the composer Minoru Miki's *Marimba Spiritual* ring out and mesmerize us with rhythmically complex designs.

The choreography is fast, asymmetrical, and tense; balletic control harnessed to propelling energy and tinted with African-style release. It builds steadily, with dancers pouring into streams of light and then disappearing in semi-darkness. The dancers are riveted by the choreography and they dance with vivid commitment. At one point, two women and two men rush to the front of the stage. The women pose on point, back leg in arabesque. One holds the man's hand, then lets go as if to balance; the other goes it alone (her "partner" turns his back). The women never do balance, exactly: instead they waver and totter, legs and arms groping the air for stability. They do not fall, but show us how they might. We watch them hang over a cliff, and the suspense is gripping.

In *Marimba*, the cluster of ideas and tensions that constituted the "old" ballet no longer applies. Instead individuals are lost in a fray of movement; groups are broken, diffused, far-flung; lights, thick air, and low ceilings close in and open out with cinematic momentum; symmetry and proportion are obscured by speed; there is no tonic, center, or rest—the whole thing is a huge chaotic balancing act with no apparent purpose. And it is totally absorbing. Robert Hill's work is evidence that ballet can re-invent itself according to new ideas and timely principles.

Hill has an important advantage. He is a distinguished classical dancer who understands ballet from the inside. In this sense, he belongs with other classically trained choreographers, such as William Forsythe or Alonzo King, who are interested in using the dictates of ballet technique in new ways. It is crucial for a classical company to have such people, especially now. The nineteenth-century and twentieth-century "classics" look paler—more anachronistic and conservative—every year. Importing choreographers from modern dance, while interesting, will not revolutionize classicism. We need people like Hill, who do not impose ideas from the outside, but look for new content within the old forms.

WILL THERE EVER be great classical ballerinas again? Perhaps not. To become such a ballerina these days a woman would need more than mere talent: she would need the courage to throw the full weight of her career against an entrenched cultural preference for slick perfection and packaging. Given the number of flawlessly trained ballerinas in the pipeline, it is hard to imagine a dancer having such audacity. Judging from the women rewarded by ABT's directors, there is little incentive to be different. If a young dancer took a risk and failed, a more reliable substitute would always be waiting in the wings.

What seems clear is that ballet can never be the same. What began with Marie Taglioni is over. The ballerina is now a thin, empty shell of her former self. She no longer has the force or the intelligence to steer an art. Whether that is good news or bad news depends on the self-knowledge of artists. If they stick to the barren path of perfection, classical ballet may perish. But if they have the courage to establish a complex physical and theatrical agenda, great things may still await us. History, after all, is on their side. Dance is a radical art, which has survived many previous deaths. And anyway, who are we to hold old memories so tightly? Perhaps it is time to stop mourning and move on. ■

Sicily

Itch, scabies, warts, burning, feces smeared in rags on the sidewalk.
Isaac twists, blindfolded, on the altar under his father's knife.
Dawn polishes the silver blade of the sea's horizon.
The temple is poised on the hill crown with lightly folded wings.
In a Moorish cloister, arches hang like lace. It has all
already happened: Jacob gripping the angel's thigh.
Lemons burn the tree. The tree still stands.
By morning, you will have wrested a blessing.
God raises his hand, he will use the blade to cut ocean from sky.
Isaac will walk, but he will always look behind him.
He will see gold and it will splinter in his eye.
The woman waits by the well; she will give birth to twins.
Twins will give birth to hate. Hate's wide womb will give birth
to Jacob gripping the angel's thigh
and to an explosion of gold in the firmament.
A synagogue stood here. Then a mosque.
For a blessing, grip firmly, twist, and apply pressure.
Pomegranates orbit in the vault.
The tree still stands. The baptismal font
is cracked and empty, and remembers where sunlight played.

Rosanna Warren

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The Thinkable

By Istvan Deak

German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial by John Horne and Alan Kramer

(Yale University Press, 608 pp., $40)

On August 4, 1914, the mighty German army entered neutral Belgium and soon occupied most—but never all—of the country. To the end, the Belgian army offered stubborn resistance, in alliance with British and French troops, a response unlike that of twenty-six years later in World War II. Almost from the first day of the conflict in 1914, German commanders claimed that civilians were stealthily firing at and killing their soldiers. Also from the first day, the German army took terrible revenge on the so-called free shooters, or *francs tireurs*, killing anyone thought to have wielded a weapon, and often also their family and neighbors. Hostages were taken and executed; entire villages were set on fire and their inhabitants massacred. After the war it could be established with relative precision that, in the first weeks of the conflict, the German army had killed sixty-five hundred civilians, mostly Belgian but also French, and destroyed twenty thousand buildings.

The story of German atrocities assumed immense political and historical significance. At first it helped to strengthen the resolve of the Belgians, the British, and the French to continue the fight; and later it helped to persuade the Americans to enter the war. After 1918, it enabled the Entente powers to demand huge reparations payments and the extradition of German war criminals; and conversely it allowed an otherwise badly divided German public to rally under the banner of insulted national innocence and honor.

In the interwar period, when it became clear that some of the Allied horror stories had been vastly exaggerated, especially with regard to German soldiers' cutting off the hands of Belgian children, the atrocity stories were often dismissed, especially in Great Britain and the United States, as typical wartime propaganda. As a result, when news of Nazi brutalities in World War II began coming in, many in the West refused to believe it. Incredulity regarding the German horrors perpetrated in August 1914 played a significant role in the Allies' failing to make a greater effort to help the Jews who were trapped in the clutches of the Nazis. And at the end of the war the re-told story of German brutality in August 1914 contributed to a widespread conviction that horrifying behavior was a German national trait.

Was there violent guerrilla activity in Belgium and German-occupied northern France in August 1914? Were the Germans justified in taking revenge? Which was worse, the atrocities committed by the civilian resisters or the revenge exacted by German soldiers? These and similar questions have been debated for nearly one hundred years, usually from divergent national points of view. Now, at last, two younger historians have given us what must be judged the final answer to these questions. It is unlikely that others will again undertake the same titanic research that John Horne and Alan Kramer have performed in German, French, British, and Belgian archives, or that they would come up with different results. Horne and Kramer argue their points impeccably and, I think, irrefutably. The endnotes in their book amount to some one hundred fifty pages. One wishes only that they would now publish a more popular version of their work; non-specialists would gain even more historical understanding from this supremely important book if they could be spared much of the repetition. A few atrocities recounted in all their agonizing detail could say more than a hundred horrors told briefly. This book is almost too thorough for its own good. After a while, even the massacre of innocents dulls the mind.

It all began with the legendary Schlieffen Plan and its notorious emphasis on an all-enveloping attack by the right flank of the invading German armies. The mission of this right flank, in the case of a war with France and Great Britain, was to violate Belgian neutrality and then sweep across Belgium and northern France, to isolate the small British Expeditionary Force, to surround Paris, and thus quickly to bring about the surrender of the enemy. Time was of the essence, in part because, before 1914, a long war was thought to be untenable; and in part because, of the eight German armies sent to the front, only one, the Eighth, was in the East, trying to contain the Russian steamroller until the victorious troops in the West could be transported to East Prussia to force the surrender of the Russians.

Many years before the war, German General Staff officers and railroad specialists had worked out a precise timetable for the transportation of troops. Expert opinion held that once mobilization had been ordered and the millions of reservists had flocked to the barracks, war was inevitable, if for no other reason than that the advance units of the German army had already had their quarters assigned in Belgium, and the slightest delay in the beautifully choreographed movement of troops, horses, guns, ordnance, field hospitals, mobile kitchens, mobile altars, and so on would lead to catastrophic confusion. It did so, incidentally, in Austria-Hungary, Germany's only ally at the time, when the generals could not decide whether to mobilize against Serbia alone or against both Serbia and Russia. The result was confusion and the initial defeat of the Austro-Hungarians by both the Russians and the Serbs.

Germany mobilized some four million men in August 1914, of whom 1.6 million were immediately brought to the Western front by fast-moving trains following each other at ten-minute intervals. Although Belgian independence and neutrality had been guaranteed by all the great powers, including Germany, it was assumed that the Belgians would behave rationally, allow the German armies free passage, and accept the suggestion of the German chancellor that some kind of compensation would follow after the war. But nothing of the sort happened; the Belgian army resisted, delaying the German invading army sufficiently for it to lose the entire campaign.

As Horn and Kramer explain, the German command was outraged by Belgium's stubbornness, especially when the news soon spread that Belgian civilians, even women and children, were firing at German soldiers. The result, again, was mayhem. What is truly amazing is the readiness of the Germans, from the kaiser to ordinary infantrymen, to believe the rumors without the slightest effort at seeking out the truth. It became an article of faith among Germans that Belgian civilians as well as some French civilians, often led by their own priests, perpetrated the most outrageous cruelties on isolated

Istvan Deak is the author, most recently, of *Essays on Hitler's Europe* (University of Nebraska Press).

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or wounded German soldiers.

The response was terror at its worst: beatings, shootings, arson, wanton destruction of property, theft. At Liège, which offered fierce military resistance, eight hundred fifty civilians were killed and thirteen hundred buildings were deliberately burned down in three days. At Louvain, the priceless university library was systematically demolished along with a host of other buildings. In several places German troops used civilians as human shields. At Dinant, six hundred seventy-four persons, amounting to ten percent of the population, were massacred. At Tamines, much of the population was rounded up in the church, and from there all the men, a total of three hundred eighty-three, were driven outside and executed by rifle, machine gun, and bayonet. Note, for purpose of comparison, that the infamous Lidice massacre, perpetrated by the Nazis in Czechoslovakia in June 1942, claimed only one hundred ninety-eight civilian victims.

HORNE AND KRAMER'S greatest achievement is to demonstrate that the German claims were unjustified—that there was no Belgian civilian resistance worth mentioning. The Belgian government and the local authorities repeatedly warned civilians not to take up arms against the invaders because of the possible dire consequences. In fact, no matter how hard they later tried, the Germans have never been able to come up with hard evidence to prove their inflammatory point. As Horne and Kramer demonstrate, the Germans simply concocted the legend of a "people's war" against them in order to justify their monstrous behavior.

But why such wild behavior? Horne and Kramer make it crystal clear that the action of the German soldiers was dictated by rumor and fear; that drunken and sometimes not-so-drunken soldiers fired on each other; that there was much confusion on the battlefield and in the rear; and that the normally disciplined and highly trained German troops often behaved like a mob. And precisely because of the breakdown of discipline, officers insisted even more vehemently that their troops must have been attacked from the rear, and that drastic action had to be taken.

Even this, however, does not completely explain the extreme manifestation of *furor teutonicus*. Horne and Kramer advance several persuasive theories to explain the situation, some of which undoubtedly lighten the Germans' moral burden. For one, there was the memory of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–1871, when, following the shameful rout of the French imperial armies, a republic was proclaimed that called for a *levée en masse*, a people's war against the invaders. Older Prussian officers could remember the days when fresh contingents of French recruits and armed civilians hurled themselves against the occupiers.

Unlike most other European states, moreover, Belgium had introduced compulsory universal military service very late, in 1913, which meant that there were only a few trained reserves, and that many men of military age were loitering in the towns and the villages, as were members of the Garde Civique, a semi-military force made up mostly of middle-aged bourgeois whose bowler hats and non-militaristic uniforms could be perceived as civilian outfits. The Hague Convention of 1907, which was the result of a supreme international effort to regulate warfare, had ruled that civilians had the right to oppose an invading army with weapons so long as they exhibited fixed distinctive emblems, carried their weapons openly, obeyed the orders of a commander who was responsible for his subordinates, and respected the laws and customs of war. (Those are rules, incidentally, that no modern-day freedom fighter, partisan, guerrilla, or terrorist would dream of respecting.) Unfortunately, the Hague Convention did not state how long civilian resistance could continue; it only made clear that once the invading forces had established their authority, civilians were to obey their orders or the occupiers could take the measures necessary to ensure the security of the troops. The transitional period between invasion and occupation remained unregulated, and this was when most of the German atrocities in Belgium were committed. In any case, the German Army Field Service Regulations (*Felddienstordnung*) interpreted the Hague Convention in such a way as to tolerate no civilian opposition whatsoever.

HORNE AND KRAMER also raise the fascinating if not entirely clear issue of religion. Most Belgians were Catholics, and the invading German armies came from the Protestant provinces of Prussia. German officers repeatedly expressed contempt for the Catholic priests (*Pfaffen*) and insisted that they were chiefly responsible for the illegal resistance and the alleged cruelties perpetrated on individual German soldiers. Consequently, priests and monks were shot en masse. Still, we learn also that Catholic Bavarians did not behave any better toward the French priests in the center and the right flank of the German front. What's more, Catholic German troops often brutalized the mostly Catholic and German-speaking inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine who were suspected of sympathizing with the French enemy.

In another attempt at an explanation, Horne and Kramer lay the blame on the German officer corps, and through it on the German elites, especially the various patriotic organizations, with their Social Darwinist ideology and their advocacy of ruthless expansion, which had also found expression in the extraordinary brutality with which German colonists put down the revolt of the Hereros in Southwest Africa. But this explanation is not altogether adequate. Social Darwinism was a widespread creed also in British elite circles in this period, and on occasion the British and the French colonialists behaved no better than the Germans, to say nothing of King Leopold's police in the Belgian Congo, which was known to cut off the hands of recalcitrant or lazy natives. In fact, the mutual accusation of mutilating the defenseless took its inspiration from the Congo example. But perhaps Horne and Kramer are right in claiming that the Germans translated their Social Darwinist convictions into action more often than the others.

Most persuasive among the arguments marshaled by Horne and Kramer is that the Germans had developed a special ideology of war. Conscious of their isolation among the great powers, haunted by a fear of encirclement and at the same time wildly expansionist, the German Great General Staff and their non-military supporters adhered to the idea of a total war: it was to be pursued at all costs and to the bitter end. The more brutal and barbaric the Germans appeared to their enemies, the better for the German cause. Only this can explain the fact that in the aftermath of the sinking of the British ocean liner *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915, in which 1,198 civilians perished, German society from the kaiser down congratulated the U-boat commander, and a commemorative medal was struck to celebrate this wonderful deed. (Unfortunately for Germany, the sinking played a crucial role in bringing the United States into the war.) And to all this we must add the German officer corps's contempt for such amateurs and irregular soldiers as the Garde Civique. Characteristically, in July 1916 the Germans sentenced and executed a British sea captain who had tried to ram a German submarine with his ship, even though he was not part of the Royal Navy. Never mind that German submarines had been under orders to sink any British ship without warning.

The German officers' maniacal insistence on professionalism may actually have been one reason why Germany lost the war. According to experts, another eight army corps could have been trained before the war, which would have ensured

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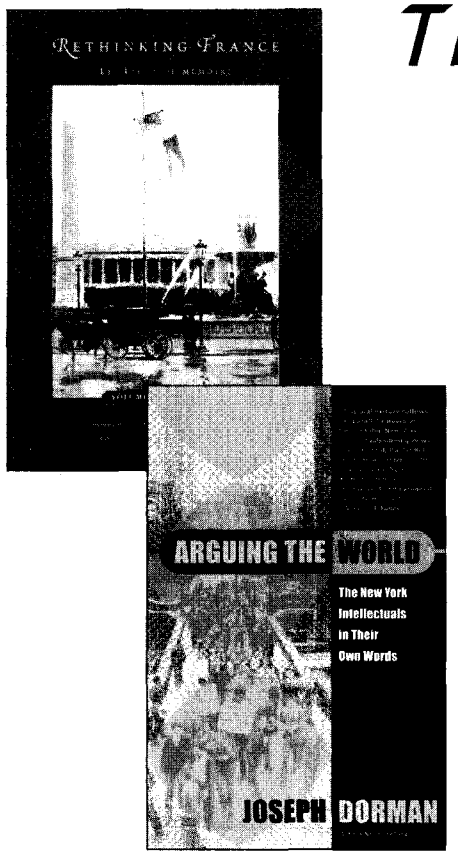
victory in the West, but there were no cadres. The German ruling elite's refusal to accept officers rising from the ranks, or officers of lower middle class, working class, or—*horribile dictu*—Jewish or socialist background ensured that there would not be enough commanders and thus not enough soldiers at the front; hence the German commanders' fanatical ruthlessness and their effort to squeeze the utmost from their soldiers. Infantrymen on the right flank of the invading armies had to march up to forty miles a day in the summer heat while carrying a load of about seventy pounds. Small wonder that many soldiers went berserk.

Horne and Kramer explain that Belgian and French civilians were not alone in being accused of illegal guerrilla activity at the beginning of the war. Russians, especially the Cossacks, took it for granted that the Jews of Poland and Galicia were spying for the Central Powers, and they treated the Jews accordingly. Similarly, Austro-Hungarian troops complained of civilian hostility even within the Dual Monarchy, hanging hundreds of Eastern Orthodox priests for spying and for alleged atrocities against Habsburg soldiers. What aggravated matters there was the incredibly complex ethnic and religious composition of the czarist and Habsburg armies, which allowed for the most diverse inside and outside hostilities. Hungarians, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims were said to be particularly harsh on the Serbs; Czech soldiers of Austria-Hungary were said, often wrongly, to side with the Russians. Ultimately, though, these particular atrocities and horror stories created less of a sensation in the world press, and they barely figure in the historical literature, probably because the Eastern front was seen as a barbaric place to begin with.

Among its many other qualities, Horne and Kramer's book excels in explaining the rampant contradictions in the treatment of prisoners of war and civilians during World War I. Soldiers who survived the perils of surrender were likely to be treated according to the international conventions, whether in France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, or Russia. Captive officers enjoyed the privileges traditionally granted to noblemen. If the death rate among POWs was high, as it was in Russia and Serbia, this was owed more to poverty and to problems of food supply than to the ill will of the captors. The treatment of suspect civilians in Belgium and elsewhere also improved markedly as the war progressed. Still, the initial damage had been done in 1914, and during the next several decades propaganda battened on these events.

The Entente powers were not long in taking up the issue of German "frightfulness." As is inevitable in such cases, facts quickly became indistinguishable from fiction. There were nearly two hundred thousand Belgian refugees in Great Britain; many among them exaggerated their tales of suffering, and the sensationalist press was quick to do the same. In this way there was formed the image of the wild Hun, usually pictured as the kaiser or a beefy Prussian sergeant, skewering children or raping supine and scantily clad young women. In Holland, the popular artist Louis Raemaekers produced a series of best-selling drawings on the subject. The official British Bryce Commission, set up to investigate the issue of atrocities impartially, tended to accept all the reports that poured in from the front, from refugees, and from the mostly biased journalists. All this served to contribute to a general dehumanization of the enemy. As Rudyard Kipling put it in *The Morning Post* on June 22, 1915: "However the world pretends to divide itself, there are only two divisions in the world today—human beings and Germans."

A particularly gory mutual accusation was mutilation. According to officially propagated stories, not only were the arms of Belgian children cut off regularly,



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as were the arms of German soldiers, but genitals were sometimes removed and stuffed into the mouths of victims on both sides. Other victims were allegedly poisoned or blinded. In fact, as Horne and Kramer demonstrate, there is not a shred of evidence to show that either side perpetrated such horrors.

GERMANY'S SURRENDER ON November 11, 1918 was followed by an even greater wave of anti-German feeling and demands for retribution. At the Versailles peace treaty in June 1919, Germany was declared responsible for the outbreak of the war and had to promise to extradite its war criminals, the kaiser among them, to be tried by an international court. At first the Allied extradition list included thousands of names, but later only hundreds; and in the end not a single person had to be extradited. Instead the Leipzig Supreme Court was entrusted with the task of judging German war criminals: only about a dozen were actually tried, fewer than that were given relatively light sentences, and none was kept in prison for more than a few months.

Even this parody of justice led to ferocious German protests, greatly weakening the prestige of the democratic Weimar government. While Horne and Kramer are perfectly right in pointing this out, they might also have mentioned that at least one trial in Leipzig established a crucial principle, namely, that the orders of a superior were no justification for having committed atrocities. This was the point made in the case of two German U-boat officers who, acting under the orders of their commander, machine-gunned the lifeboats carrying survivors from the sinking British hospital ship *Llandovery Castle*. For obeying such a horrifying order, the Leipzig court in 1921 sentenced the two subalterns to jail. Acting on the basis of this decision, the Nuremberg Court and the postwar German courts, at least in my own view, could have tried and severely punished all the Nazi mass murderers. Instead the courts chose to create legally doubtful ex-post-facto laws so as to punish the defendants.

Protests against what was now increasingly perceived as the postwar mistreatment of the Germans arose with particular vehemence in Great Britain. As Horne and Kramer show, there were many reasons for this, including a renewed British hostility to France and its Eastern allies (who seemed to covet too much territory), and the recognition that international economic cooperation, particularly with Germany, which now more than ever was the greatest power in Europe, was the key to economic recovery. Prominent British writers such as Siegfried Sassoon returned from the front decrying the alleged patriotic duty to die for the fatherland. The pacifist wave culminated in the famous resolution adopted in 1933 by the majority of students at the Oxford Union, a debating society, never to take up arms for king and country.

Fashionable socialism and fashionable fascism contributed to the same sentiment, as did the popular revisionist work of such American historians as Sidney B. Fay, who in 1928 in his phenomenally successful study *The Origins of the World War* blamed such things as the international arms race, yellow journalism, and secret treaties, not the Germans, for the sufferings and the war. Add to this the fact that the Belgians, who had been the principal victims of German atrocities, by the 1930s kept quiet about it all, so as not to aggravate the Germans in hopes of ensuring the inviolability of their frontiers in the next war.

In reality, this second attempt at neutrality failed as well, but this time the Belgian army's unwillingness to plan cooperation with the French and British armies, and Belgium's quick surrender in May 1940, contributed greatly to the defeat of France. Among the things facilitating the surrender was that in 1940, unlike in 1914, the German troops behaved in an exemplary fashion toward the civilians and the defeated enemy soldiers. Hitler's brilliant policy move in this respect created the impression in Europe not only of German invincibility, but also of German generosity of spirit. True, the German army behaved abominably in Poland, but as usual what counted in the West was what happened in the West.

IT IS NOT easy to determine the degree to which the repudiated stories of German atrocities in World War I contributed to the Allies' unwillingness or inability to extend maximum assistance to the victims of Nazi persecution. There were many other reasons for this as well: generalized xenophobia; the fear of job competition by refugees; the possibility that Nazi agents would infiltrate the refugee masses; widespread anti-Semitism in Great Britain and the United States; and the unwillingness of the Allies to create the impression that the war was being fought for Jewish interests. By 1942, British counter-intelligence was well informed about the nature of the so-called Final Solution of the Jewish Question, but it was unwilling to reveal its ability to decode top-secret German communications by spreading the information.

As the war progressed, the Allies were able to do less and less for the Jews without weakening their own war effort, such as exchanging Jews for trucks, which was Adolf Eichmann's idea, or giving the Germans a wonderful propaganda weapon by bombing Auschwitz—a strange idea mostly concocted long after the war—which would have meant killing thousands of inmates as a result of high-altitude bombing, the only possible method by which Auschwitz could have been attacked by American airplanes located in southern Italy. But one factor in the Allied unwillingness to act on behalf of the Jews was certainly a general reluctance to believe in the reality of the German mass killings. George Orwell complained of this as late as 1944. And this hesitation certainly owed much to the memory of what had become of the 1914 atrocity stories in the interwar period. The true nature of the Holocaust became known only during the last days of the war.

As Horne and Kramer brilliantly demonstrate, the universal German conviction in 1914 of widespread and extremely violent civilian resistance was only a myth, but the myth led to extreme retribution and many civilian casualties. In turn, a new myth of deliberate and premeditated German frightfulness was created, which in turn fostered the myth among Germans of their being the victims of civilian atrocities and then of viciously unfair accusations. This, again, created its own myths, always with negative consequences for international understanding.

ONLY TODAY DOES a genuine spirit of reconciliation, or perhaps simply a widespread popular ignorance of what happened in 1914, and even between 1939 and 1945, appear to allow a more dispassionate treatment of this subject. And yet the problem of the relations between occupied and occupier has hardly disappeared from the contemporary world. Indeed, this relationship has become the most terrifying dilemma of our age. Today not only do occupation forces often commit atrocities that put the German brutes of 1914 to shame, but the occupied often engage in terrorist activities undreamed of by yesteryear's resistance fighters. No *franc tireur* of World War I and no partisan of World War II would have deliberately massacred totally innocent and uninvolved civilians, often in one's own camp, for the purpose of spreading terror and uncertainty in the land.

What always makes things worse is the fear and the rumors of terror and repression. When Lieutenant Bob Kerrey led his troops into a Vietnamese village, gunning down its inhabitants, he acted upon the conviction that every peasant in black pajamas might be a Vietcong fighter and that the village he and his men attacked

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contained such fighters. In reality there were no Vietcong in the village, and only innocent women and children were killed. Soldiers will always be terrified of being shot in the back, and civilians will always be victims of the wrath of soldiers, whether or not any violence had previously taken place. The question is how to slow down the ever-escalating violence. This is very difficult so long as the principle prevails that "your terrorist is my freedom fighter." Only superbly trained professional soldiers, without any ideological baggage, may be able to deal with guerrilla attacks and the gnawing fear of such attacks. ■

Adventures in the Skin Trade

By ANNE HOLLANDER

Memoirs of a Courtesan in Nineteenth-Century Paris by Céleste Mogador translated and with an introduction by Monique Fleury Nagem

(University of Nebraska Press, 325 pp., $55)

IF PARIS WAS the capital of the nineteenth century, her courtesans were the capital of Paris—certainly her literary capital. The city's legendary fame was bound up with them, like that of Venice in the sixteenth century. You do not hear much about the famous courtesans of Elizabethan London; and you do not hear anything about the famous courtesans of nineteenth-century Vienna or St. Petersburg, of The Hague or Madrid. Going by what you read, the high-living residents of those cities in that era felt bound to compete only on the Parisian scene, with each other and with their French counterparts. There, ostentatiously swelling the coffers of Parisian dressmakers and jewelers, real estate agents and interior decorators, horse-dealers and carriage builders, florists and caterers, they happily joined the international race to become besotted with, and spend their patrimony on, and fight duels over, and shoot themselves in despair for love of, the renowned courtesans of Paris, who were themselves steadily enriching the Parisian papers, publishers, and theater managers engaged in promoting tall tales about them, dramatizing the circumstances of their lives not only in novels and plays but also in news stories and magazine pieces.

Rubbing elbows with the Spanish dukes and the Dutch barons who appear in the pages of Céleste Mogador's memoirs, along with plenty of rich Frenchmen noble and ignoble, were the French writers who were then fostering the mythology of the Paris courtesan, creating the mid-century literary offshoot of earlier Romantic literary myths about ambitious young men, compelling and demanding women, and the passionately destructive attachments between them. Alfred de Musset, with whom Mogador had a dramatic encounter in 1840, during her beginnings in a whorehouse, had described such an attachment in his *Confession d'un enfant du siècle* in 1836; and he was doubtless influenced, not only in his writing but in the view that he held of his own amorous life, by Benjamin Constant's *Adolphe* of 1816, an earlier masterpiece about a similar *amour*, similarly taken from real life.

The women in those earlier Romantic novels had not been courtesans, but the wives or the mistresses of other men, strong-minded free spirits, the characters loosely based on the real-life Germaine de Stäel and George Sand. Courtesans had a still earlier literary model in the famous character of Manon Lescaut, who appeared in Prévost's novel in 1731: a simple young girl, full of passionate devotion to the princely but poor young lover whom she can never marry, who sees no moral problem in forming liaisons with rich men in order to further the young lovers' common fortunes, so that they can be happy together. Manon's noble young man is equally impassioned and devoted, even bearing the great emotional burden caused by her behavior; he follows her to the harsh distant country where she is deported as a convict, and buries her in the desert after she dies in his arms.

Echoes of this story resonate throughout subsequent French fiction and much European theater and opera—the theme of a passionate, unlawful love that governs the lives of two people in quite different ways, transcending all social and sexual order, engendering an agony of rage at the beloved and a loathing of the self that helps kill one or both of the protagonists, certainly the woman. Similarly devoted fallen women, courtesans included, appeared in many of Balzac's novels of Parisian life, notably in his first version of *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*, which he began in 1838; and in Murger's *Scenes de la vie de Bohème* in 1847, which was made into a play with music in 1851, and finally into a spectacularly successful opera by Puccini in 1897, who had enjoyed his first success four years earlier with his opera about Manon Lescaut.

The literary theme of a gentleman's dangerous liaison with a courtesan or quasi-courtesan continued, rendered appropriately cynical and hard-headed toward the end of the century in the Realist novels of Flaubert, Zola, and the brothers Goncourt, by way of Mérimée and his non-Parisian Carmen, who appeared first in a story published in 1845 and then in Bizet's opera in 1875. Most explicit in connecting art with life, and the closest in date to the publication of Mogador's memoirs in 1854, was the younger Alexandre Dumas's *La Dame aux Camélias*, which appeared in 1848, and became his own successful play in 1852 and Verdi's controversial *La Traviata* in 1853, achieving its final apotheosis as the American movie *Camille* in 1936. Its real-life courtesan heroine had died in the Paris of 1847, and Dumas *fils* lost no time in cashing in on her literary and dramatic possibilities. Manon's name significantly appears quite early in the novel, to establish a literary pedigree for it and its heroine.

IT WAS CLEAR that by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the courtesans of Paris had been given not just a chance to flourish mightily in a newly rich, newly mobile society, but also a quasi-literary and vivid part to play, an appropriate fantasy to act out. By the 1840s, when Mogador had left the whorehouse and begun her own career, the way for an aspiring or established man of the world to have a relationship

ANNE HOLLANDER'S *Fabric of Vision: Dress and Drapery in Painting* will be published this spring by Yale University Press.

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with a Parisian courtesan was to imitate the course of a literary love affair—to fall passionately in love, to stage fits of jealousy and rage or fits of generosity and self-sacrifice, to undertake public ruptures and equally public reconciliations, to keep the emotional temperature up and skirmishes likely, usually by having liaisons with more than one courtesan at a time. The courtesans, needless to say, were also engaged with more than one protector at a time, having similar scenes and struggles with them all, so that emotional explosions of some kind were always in the offing.

The women were often of very humble origins and sordid beginnings, with unseen connections at every social level. They were treated as stars, admired, and often madly adored, but never seen as remotely worthy of respect. Their power to charm was intensified by the thrill of its threat, their vile origins and métier making them effectively unmarriageable and unassimilable into regular society, with nothing to lose but their very lives. The men who kept them were of the haute bourgeoisie and the nobility both petty and grand, who were actively interested in furthering their own careers (or in some cases salvaging them) in business or politics or diplomacy through marriage with members of families that would be useful to them, or through the marriages of their sons and daughters. They were gravely risking the possibility of such serious alliances and the money to guarantee them by frequenting the courtesans, on whom huge sums had to be spent and over whom huge scandals might erupt.

Courtesans had no legitimate social status, no credit, no honor, no future. They had only their personal attraction, style, and nerve, and whatever possessions they could manage to accumulate from their series of protectors. In the Romantic ambience, this made them wonderful and dangerous in the manner of wild beasts, which are also destined to be competitively admired, hunted, and killed, or perhaps even tamed and maintained for a time, but which can do a lot of damage to the hunter in the process. The wilder and more beastly their behavior, the more stylish or daring or unaccountable, the more they were both acclaimed and despised, and the more a man's status was increased if he could manage their presence in his life with aplomb. To promote the mythology, vast inheritances and even land, vast incomes and even capital, had to be squandered on them, borrowed against at huge interest, mortgaged, gambled, irretrievably lost—but a gentleman finally left without a penny could impulsively buy a set of stunning emeralds on credit for a courtesan, who might show them off at the opera that night but sell them the next day to pay her own pressing debts and those of her unglamorous family. The gentleman, on the verge of arrest, might have to leave that same day for the ends of the earth.

In this milieu, everyone could lie to everyone else and hurl insults at one another amid professions of passion and requests for forgiveness, all under the pressure of so much amorous excitement, so many social and financial risks and disparities, so much literary influence from the past. It seems that these unstable circumstances were the best part of the bargain for all concerned. The bejeweled women would go to the theater, to the opera, and to parties, where the evident jealousies among them would be fun for the men to despise, and the women could fan the evident rivalry over them among the men, along with increasing the constant tension, not only between their feverish, precarious world (*le demi-monde*) and the elegant drawing rooms of legitimate society (*le monde*), but also between those women with the right to be called courtesans—the known mistresses of prominent men, with a certain provisional status in the *demi-monde*—and ordinary prostitutes, with none.

Céleste Venard, nicknamed Mogador after a Moroccan town conquered by the French, was first the latter and then the former; and we see her painfully learning the difference and trying to reconcile the two. Mogador wrote her memoirs on the advice of her lawyer, who was helping her through the several lawsuits brought against her by the noble family of one of her protectors—the only one whom she devotedly loved and, against all the odds, did actually marry. This book was meant, on the face of it, to demonstrate her right to the serious respect of her eventual judges; but we can instantly see that she conceived it as a source of eventual income.

Mogador's marriage, which is not even mentioned in the book, has just taken place when the story ends, and her new husband, the now totally ruined Comte Gabriel-Paul-Josselin-Lionel de Chabrillan, is about to take her back with him to Australia, where he had spent the previous two years vainly prospecting for gold. He had gone far into debt before he even met Céleste, but their liaison depleted his resources entirely, including lands and château, and he had decamped in a destitute state, owing hundreds of thousands. Céleste includes some of their letters from that period, full of reproach and self-reproach, bitter complaint and lamentation, passionate devotion and pleas for forgiveness—the whole Romantic gamut.

While Lionel was fruitlessly and very self-pityingly searching for gold Down Under, his infuriated family had been trying to establish that all Céleste's property, in fact rightfully hers and some of it even lent to him, had been basely swindled out of him by her—to establish that he was not destitute at all, but that she should be. After his departure, Lionel's creditors had likewise seized many of Céleste's possessions, and she was doing some acting simply to make ends meet. Just then, according to her account, a rich English gentleman and enamored former protector offered marriage, in true romance-novel style; and, in the same style, she backed off at the last minute (all dressed for the wedding—we get the description), her absolute love for Lionel finally preventing her from accepting this sincere offer of absolute security. In due course, after his empty-handed return to Paris, the impoverished Lionel finally managed to land a job as French consul in Melbourne, and the reunited couple rushed over to London to be married on the quiet. They were soon to depart for Australia together as a respectable married pair, to live peaceably at a very great distance from Paris.

During Lionel's two-year absence, Céleste had boned up on the law and fought her way through the courts with her lawyer's help, eventually collecting all her years of journal entries and composing this memoir to convince various judges of her good faith and basic right to her own possessions. It was 1854; she was thirty years old. The original French title of the book was *Adieu au monde: Mémoires de Céleste Mogador*, to indicate that she was permanently leaving The Life, if not this life. But as plans for departure were under way and the four different trials were reaching their separate conclusions, the memoir was rushed into print without her permission.

She had lent copies to various people for their opinion, obviously with an eye to eventual publication when she was safely established elsewhere, and one of them had sent it to an eager publisher. She left just as the book appeared, to instant furor; and when she finally arrived in Melbourne after months at sea, it was goodbye to respectability—all doors were closed to Céleste Mogador, who had exposed her scandalous past in a scandalous book, and then dared to pass herself off as a countess and the wife of a consul of France. Meanwhile, back at the ranch (I mean Paris), the book was seized and suppressed as harmful to society, though not before becoming a best-seller; and the same thing happened when she tried to bring it out a second time in 1858, having returned home a widow. We note that in

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this real-life version of the Manon story, it was the staunch woman who survived, and the feckless Lionel who died in the inimical clime.

Reading the memoirs, you can see why they offended. The influence of the prevailing literary mythology about courtesans gives this particular book a harsh piquancy. Mogador has superimposed the precise, vivid, and often extraneous details and episodes of personal experience onto a standard tale of early neglect and persecution, temporary despair and temptation, a shameful fall, a struggle to rise, and a final triumph hedged with danger. She clearly wrote it herself, though doubtless with her lawyer's assistance; but it is not a man's account posing as a woman's, like John Cleland's *Fanny Hill: Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, which was written as straight pornography a century earlier in England, with a roughly similar plot.

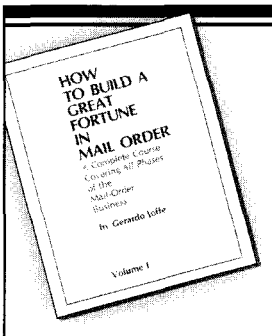
THIS BOOK ABOUT the real life of a woman of pleasure has no erotic details whatever beyond the odd bodice-rip: Mogador had to appear to be above all that in this account. Instead, it includes all the frantic untidiness of a perpetually desperate existence—hers, and that of everyone she knows who inhabits this world, about which we hear much more than any Romantic or pornographic novelist would dream of including. The details share more with the depressing ones in Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, which appeared in 1899, than they do with any French or English male writer's work before it. This is more banal than Dickens, the sordid details all the more chilling for not being lurid or over-moralized.

We can see that Mogador is writing to put herself in a good light—indeed, she confesses as much; and that means including clear-sighted observations about her own past follies and failures in an effort to appear steady and dependable at the time of writing. But in order to organize thirty years of jumbled memories, perhaps backed up with journal entries, comprising what everything looked like and tasted like, what everyone said and wore, quite apart from what events occurred and how they related to other events, she has followed the course of a popular novel that has been turned into a play—beginning, of course, by saying that this is no novel, but an unvarnished record, a self laid bare. One of her first readers, Alexandre Dumas *père*, duly said that her text reminded him of that lapidary work that begins with the same disclaimer, Rousseau's *Confessions*.

It has Rousseau's artful artlessness, but not his artful style. Extremely intelligent, talented but uneducated, Mogador writes in brisk, choppy sentences about her life, using her remarkable memory to compose scene after dramatic scene consisting mostly of fast dialogue, interspersed with minute descriptions of things, rooms, garments, faces, vehicles, streets—and of many small activities, pertinent or not, that are often tawdry, sometimes thrilling, sometimes boring, always mesmerizingly specific. Since both the first and second editions of this work were suppressed, copies of it have been scarce, enduring mainly in libraries until 1968, when a publisher called Les Amis de l'Histoire brought it out again, helpfully dividing up its chapters into sections with subheadings. The present translator fortunately has used that edition, since without its organizational assistance this book might be hard to read—which was perhaps one of its unacceptable qualities at the start. It was undoubtedly too tediously authentic, too much like life, too little like literature, despite all the echoes in it of Dumas *fils*, Prévost, Balzac, Murger, and Musset, echoes absorbed quite early by the author.

CÉLESTE MOGADOR WAS NO student of literature, but she loved the theater and worked in it at various times to earn money, despite her lack of talent. She adoringly recounts two private meetings with the famous actress Rachel, including everything the great stage lady wore each time. She remarks that her own adolescent entry into prostitution was made easy because her pubescent head was already crammed with phantoms derived from the stages of the boulevard theaters—gowned and jeweled phantoms, no doubt. She says that at ten she could not read but that she liked to wear pretty dresses and have her hair in pretty curls, and that she was much petted for her good looks. Her hatmaker mother, from whom she inherited her practical gifts, had never sent her to school but had taken her to popular plays, which were undoubtedly full of wickedly glamorous visions in the Romantic literary mode.

That same mother, whose husband had decamped years before, was still fatally attracted to crooks and villains, the sexual advances of one of whom finally caused Céleste to run away from home at fifteen, with a few sous in her pocket and no place to go. After some days of furtive street survival, she tells us, the starved and vagrant Céleste was finally fed and sheltered by—yes, a kindly prostitute, who let her know that for harboring a female of fifteen she might get sent to prison for six months. Céleste was plainly instructed about the downside of being a registered whore, including needing to report to the police every two weeks, never being seen in the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company of virtuous women, never going out in the day, and other humiliating requirements.

The two were promptly arrested on the way to deposit Céleste with relatives. The generous prostitute was released on Céleste's good report of her, but Céleste herself now had to learn about the corruptions of life on the inside, first at the House of Detention and then at the Reformatory of the St. Lazare Prison, where she spent many weeks being told about the rosy side of a prostitute's life, while her external friend's attempts to inform her mother of her whereabouts were failing. Young prostitutes doing time at St. Lazare received baskets of goodies and finery from the houses where they worked; and older women planted by those same houses would describe to nine- and ten-year-old inmates the fine living and lovely clothes to be had in such establishments, in contrast to the lice, rags, semi-starvation, and brutal treatment at the Reformatory. But there they were also taught to read and to write, to sing and to embroider; and Céleste made a friend, who left telling her to come and see her when she got out.

Back home at last, but constantly put in the wrong by her mother's resident villain, Céleste tells us that she formed the resolve to flee on her sixteenth birthday, when she could legally be registered as a prostitute in one of the houses, preferably the one where her friend worked. This she did, theoretically sealing her fate and ruining her life. In her account, she loudly laments this step as her own grievous fault, with a few asides about the combined pernicious influences of a corrupt society and a weak mother. Céleste always needs to seem presently virtuous, neither to boast of past errors nor to blame them on others; and her deliberately modest tone only points up her strength of character and courage, just as she intends. She clearly omits much, but never any of her own generous actions—nor indeed those of others toward her. She seems to possess the true generosity that recognizes it in others; and she lets us see how enabling and important a quality this was behind the scenes of the merciless *demi-monde*, where greed, vanity, self-interest, and self-indulgence were stoking all the fires.

Once her name was on it, a girl could not get off the register, which put her automatically into a dishonorable caste and constantly on the wrong side of the law, unless she could find and keep some legitimate and steady work, which of course employers would not give her if they knew she was registered. In the days of Céleste's glory as a courtesan, she felt wretchedly marked and hampered by the existence of her name and number on the list. Upon arriving in her diamonds at a gathering, she might suddenly find other women outraged at being in the same room with her, and herself the target of harsh abuse; and if she neglected to keep signing the register, she could be arrested at any time. It was no joke: for persistence in this irregularity, you could go to prison and even lose your mind or your life there. At an early moment in her career, Céleste had tried to set up a shop with her mother and make some respectable money; but during the first days of this soon-to-fail enterprise Céleste was once cornered in her apartment, hourly expecting the police, with no hope of escape without arrest and imprisonment. She made a serious attempt to gas herself to death, from which she was saved only by the unexpected return of a servant. Her lungs never quite recovered.

Free to move, to change, to create and to re-create themselves were the courtesans who might have been vilely seduced and betrayed in the remote past, but who had been lucky in their subsequent acquaintance. They could lay claim to as much status as they could promote for themselves, borrowing any sort of false past or false name they chose. But the ones registered as prostitutes were stuck in that definition and could never live it down, however many dukes adored them. Céleste's low-paid, intermittent work in show business was never steady or decent enough to qualify her for getting off the register, and her presence on it was another reason for the outrage felt by her husband's noble family at the prospect of his marriage to her, at a time when she had more money than he did. Just before the marriage took place, when her career as a courtesan was at an end, her name was finally removed from the infamous register through the intervention of Prince Napoleon, a nephew of the first Napoleon, a cousin of the present Emperor Napoleon III, and luckily a well-disposed former lover of Céleste's.

Another source of her bad reputation in the Chabrillan family, and also in Melbourne—perhaps even a worse one than her being a registered whore—was Céleste's celebrated job as an equestrienne at the Franconi Hippodrome, one of several outdoor circuses in Paris at the time. This one specialized in reproducing the kind of spectacular chariot race staged by French royalty in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, originally suggested by the ancient Roman ones—except that the Franconi charioteers were all girls. The décor was sumptuous, the racers' costumes were very daring, and Céleste became one of them with no previous experience of handling horses, let alone racing them in a chariot. Her current acting job had been a washout—she was an indifferent actress, and even her theater folded—but she was almost immediately hired for this sensational and dangerous kind of performance, which was all the rage among Parisian pleasure-lovers.

The speed and the physical danger, the revealing clothes and the fierce struggle among the charioteers, made the Hippodrome races thrilling to watch; and for a girl to make such a display of herself was considered a matter of choice—not, like low-level prostitution, a matter of bad luck. Managing her team in a tunic slit to the hip, tracked by hundreds of male eyes, she was seen to disgrace herself willingly. Céleste performed very well, and her personal clientele became ever more numerous and more rivalrous as a result of this exposure, until the inevitable bad accident.

Again she might well have died then and there: Céleste has already told us about several of her youthful associates—relatives, prisoners, prostitutes, courtesans, equestriennes—who met an abrupt end from grotesque accidents, mortal diseases, brutal assaults, childbirth, suicide, botched medical treatment after botched suicide. Abortion was undoubtedly another frequent cause, but impossible for this author to touch on here. Besides her own suicide attempt, she herself had already survived smallpox and various knife wounds, including one from her mother. It helped to be young and essentially defiant, and to have an exceptional constitution: Céleste's career in the world of vice took her from age sixteen to age thirty, but she lived to be eighty-five.

In her Hippodrome accident, Céleste underwent a dreadful set of vividly described injuries to one leg, for which the attendant doctor's treatment, also carefully described, put her in direct danger of gangrene and imminent death; until another doctor providentially appeared at her bedside, reversed the orders, performed a ghastly-sounding procedure, and saved her life. So here is yet another side of this difficult life, the fragility of everybody's health for lack of sensible attention from hospitals and doctors, let alone serious medical care, even such as it then was.

The grim medical details throughout this text must have made readers shudder and helped to kill Céleste's book. One remembers that the death of Violetta in *La Traviata* is fairly gracefully accomplished, and a doctor who can do nothing is at least in sympathetic attendance. Only with *Madame Bovary* in 1857 did disgusting medical description become an element in the modernization of French letters, and that book, too, got its author into trouble when it appeared.

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Céleste Venard, who was called Mogador when she was a courtesan, was finally Comtesse de Chabrillan and the wife of a French consul; but she never lived the life of such a personage. The life she did lead, as anybody could predict from reading these memoirs, was that of a hard-working professional writer. Her gift for swift dialogue and strong description made her a natural producer of popular fiction and drama, and she began right away, as soon as life in Melbourne proved irremediably tedious, with no social dimension because of her ill repute. In 1857, *The Gold Robbers*, her first novel, based on Lionel's early accounts of the Australian gold rush, had a great success, and was once again praised by Dumas *père*; and while she was at it she began another set of memoirs, eventually published in 1877, about her short married life in the antipodes with Lionel, who died there at the age of forty in 1858. During the following decades, once again in Paris and writing constantly to earn a living, Céleste published all her plays, novels, operettas, and novellas under her legal noble name, to the great discomfiture of the family, who vainly kept trying to pay her not to do so. They seemed still to believe, just like Alfred Germont's father, that a courtesan had neither honor nor feelings and would do anything for money. Eventually she moved to a retirement home, where she died in 1909.

It is the editors of the 1968 edition of these memoirs who tell us that Céleste Mogador kept a journal, and that this text relies on years and years of entries in it. The present English translator says nothing about such a resource, but it certainly seems likely that Céleste was a true writer from the start, fashioning a private account of her life as it unfolded in an essentially literary form, just as so many nineteenth-century writers did in their journals and letters. Both introductions emphasize that she longed to be part of a literary and creative circle; but she never made it. Essentially she could not afford it; she needed dukes and counts, not bohemian writers with unreliable incomes. She had had her youthful encounter with Musset, although that memory was very humiliating; and then in her days of glory she did get to know Thomas Couture, the painter of *The Romans of the Decadence*. It is tempting to think she was the model for one of those gracefully abandoned-looking women now on view in the Musée d'Orsay; but she met him only some years after that controversial painting had ensured his fame.

The lively and lightly ironical tone of this volume gives it great charm; but I am sorry to say that its present translator has found no way to convey this charm in English. Monique Fleury Nagem seems to lack her author's own abundant sense of humor. Nagem writes rather condescendingly and heavily about her in the introduction, for example seeing Mogador's brilliant descriptions of rich surroundings, when they are offered during serious moments, as evidence of her frivolous nature. The translation is similarly lumpish. The French colloquialisms in the book are quite standard, not arcane nor antique, but Nagem, who seems not to be a native speaker of English, has forgotten that slang goes out of date, and that certain words also do. She allows no scope for the play of a consistent period flavor in the language of the English version, such as the French displays. Instead, she will use dated modern expressions ("all set" for *toute parée*) right alongside faintly pretentious archaisms ("death resided with her" for *elle avait la mort chez elle*). Putting "all set" and "resided" in the same sentence gives a bumpy and unnatural effect; and so does Nagem's inability to refrain from putting in all the French uses of the exclamation mark, most of which are not equivalently used in English and should be omitted. Left in, they give the text a jolting progress.

There are mistakes: *jupon* does not translate as "slip," it means only "petticoat," and since this garment was universally worn in the 1850s, it should be there under its right name. She says that "a man propositioned her" when the context shows that she means "proposed to her," and other things like that. But there are more general qualities that make this translation tend to downgrade the original. Despite whatever Mogador's education actually consisted of, and perhaps because of help that she may have had, she is never ungrammatical in this memoir, and neither are her characters: the book was designed to come across as a highly respectable piece of writing. But Nagem frequently uses the locution "I would like for one of my companions to take my place" or "Would you like for me not to go?", a usage that may exist in current American vernacular but is more egregiously incorrect than anybody's speech in Mogador's French.

To give the truly analogous effect of this French book in English, you would have to absorb and then reflect the flavor of the language in popular novels and memoirs published in English before 1855—to write familiarly in a generally Dickensian or Wilkie Collins–like mode, say, without directly imitating those authors, using the standard grammar and colloquialisms of the time, being careful to omit any obviously twentieth-century usage, or for that matter any specifically eighteenth-century usage. Then you would do this engaging and stalwart woman, this wonderfully straightforward writer, the justice of showing her distinctive achievement against the background of her own literary moment. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 4

Judge not

To the editors:

Jeffrey Rosen makes the case that Justice Stephen Breyer's judicial philosophy is one of modest, humble pragmatism, "realistic about the institutional capabilities of different officials in a complicated government to weigh questions of fact and value" ("Modest Proposal," January 14). That same lack of hubris might have been absent when then-Federal Appeals Court Judge Breyer was the architect, and longtime supporter, of the federal criminal mandatory-sentencing guidelines—a topic not discussed in the article.

During the 1980s the call for reform of federal criminal sentencing resulted in the creation of intricate sentencing guidelines that constrain federal judges in their sentencing of federal criminal defendants. In November 1998 Breyer joined the chorus of disenchanted federal judges and termed his brainchild flawed, the guidelines having become too complex and too intertwined with mandatory minimum sentences. A less idealistic, more pragmatic view of judicial power might not have produced such an unwieldy system.

Michael Brennan
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

To the editors:

Rosen's article about Justice Breyer's judicial restraint is comforting. Breyer is right to defer to Congress on campaign finance reform and on the need to coordinate federal, state, and local authorities on gun checks and national security. Breyer's votes upholding regulation of pornography on television and nude dancing are also sensible. Breyer's opinion striking down the partial-birth abortion laws of 31 states was, unfortunately, judicial hyperactivism. But if, over all, Breyer adheres to the restraint associated with Justice Louis Brandeis, Judge Learned Hand, and Professor James Thayer, democratic self-government will be strengthened.

Barbara McJilton Fabic
Gaithersburg, Maryland

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MOSCOW DIARIST

Back to the USSR

IF YOU ARE EVER IN MOSCOW, visit the Sculpture Garden across from Gorky Park, a landmark that evokes both the end of the Soviet era and contemporary Russians' conflicted attitude toward their defunct motherland. In the heady days of August 1991, when the Soviet government effectively collapsed, Moscow saw a spree of monument razings and thefts—from the five-story statue of secret police founder Felix Dzerzhinsky toppled in front of KGB headquarters to a small figure of writer Maxim Gorky apparently snatched from somewhere in the subway. These monuments, or what was left of them, were lugged to a godforsaken empty lot across the street from Gorky Park. There they lay haphazardly for a couple of years, a delightful destination for children and for other Russians moved to desecrate old Soviet symbols just a little more. In 1993 the old monuments were set upright, but standing there in the unmowed grass or unplowed snow, they still looked rather undignified. A couple of years later they were cleaned up, restored to their pedestals, and then enclosed by a fence to prevent further desecration. Through the efforts of an elderly curator backed with money from the city of Moscow, the surrounding lot was landscaped and populated with a variety of other sculptures, earning it the unassuming name "Sculpture Garden." Dzerzhinsky and the rest became a small part of the exhibit, at once restored to grandeur and entirely depoliticized.

THE SCULPTURE GARDEN IS NOT A bad metaphor for what has happened to Russia over the last ten years. The Soviet Union, an empire founded on ideology, immortalized itself in an inordinate number of symbols. When the USSR collapsed, so did many of its monuments, memorials, and ornaments. But in the intervening decade, as the nation's effort to examine its history critically has fizzled, most of these symbols have been dragged out and, if not exactly rehabilitated, at least recycled. The process reached its zenith in January, when the Duma, the lower house of parliament, voted to make disrespect for a rehabbed version of the Soviet national anthem a criminal offense.

WHEN RUSSIA EMERGED FROM THE ruins of the USSR, President Boris Yeltsin tried to choose the country's new state symbols by unilateral decree: a white, blue, and red flag in place of the red one; an imperial two-headed eagle in place of the hammer and sickle as the state seal; and a tune from a prerevolutionary opera in place of the Soviet anthem. It was a confusing mixture of democratic and monarchic symbols, and it did not go far: A succession of Communist-dominated parliaments rejected Yeltsin's provisional symbols and over time grew more and more fervent in their efforts to restore the old ones. For years Russia could not even settle on symbols to print on identity documents—to this day most citizens carry red passports with a hammer and sickle and the letters USSR on the cover. Meanwhile, the population grew increasingly nostalgic for the old empire: By the tenth anniversary of the Soviet Union's collapse, three-quarters of the population had come to regret it.

THIS NOSTALGIA HELPED ELECT Vladimir Putin, who promised the kind of political stability Russians vaguely remembered and yearned for. And so, by the end of his first year in office, Putin undertook a high-profile effort to resolve Russia's symbolic mess, pushing another odd combination of symbols through parliament: Yeltsin's democratic tricolor and imperial-eagle seal, but the old Soviet anthem.

PUTIN'S ANTHEM CHOICE WAS NOT exactly divisive: A clear majority of Russians favored returning to the old tune. The words, however, were a bit of an issue—and not for the first time. Originally introduced to replace "The Internationale" as Soviet Russia's anthem in the 1940s, the song praised "the party of Lenin, the party of Stalin." After the cult of Stalin was debunked in 1956, that reference constituted a problem, so the anthem was performed in an instrumental version only. Finally, in 1977, the party approved a slightly tweaked version of the song: References to Stalin were replaced by "the people's force." When Putin rehabilitated the anthem again in 2000, the same author—by then an octogenarian—supplied post-Soviet lyrics, sprinkling a little God and Russia where the party used to be.

BUT, IF MOST OF THE POPULATION was content to reacquire the anthem, the opposing minority was unusually determined. The song's critics argued, correctly, that it was still essentially a Stalinist anthem, a relic of the Great Terror. Putin's response that such opposition disrespected "the lives of our fathers" only provoked his opponents to note that they had fathers too, and grandparents, many of whom had been arrested, tortured, and executed under Stalin. But Putin prevailed nonetheless: In December 2000 the Soviet anthem was restored by federal law.

STILL, IN THE YEAR THE ANTHEM HAS been in reuse, its controversial origins have caused much discomfort. Two prominent members of the Duma, both former political prisoners, refuse to rise when the anthem is played at the opening of a session. Liberal parties and organizations try to avoid embarrassment by playing alternative tunes. Last November, when Putin's presidential administration organized a gathering of 5,000 nongovernmental activists in the Kremlin itself, the government was forced at the last minute to forgo playing the anthem when a former dissident threatened to remain sitting—on the stage no less—while the music played. Just five days later, in an effort to head off such displays in the future, Unity (the main pro-Kremlin party in the Duma) introduced legislation that would make it a crime to sit while the anthem is played. When the Duma returned from vacation in January, it approved the bill overwhelmingly; it is likely to become law within a few months.

NOT THAT TODAY'S PARLIAMENT consists of rabid Stalinists. Most members, in fact, are much like the president himself: middle-aged functionaries with no discernible political beliefs beyond self-preservation. They are equally comfortable waving the Soviet red flag and the Russian tricolor, laying a wreath at a Dzerzhinsky monument or writing on letterhead featuring the double-headed eagle. Like their president and most of their countrymen, they refuse to see any evil in the system that raised them. A few people's insistence on studying and evaluating that history strikes them as a disloyal and vaguely dangerous waste of time. And so, ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, new dissidents may join old ones and go to jail for disrespecting the national anthem of the USSR.

MASHA GESSEN

MASHA GESSEN is a correspondent for *U.S. News & World Report*.

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Globalization versus Imperialism

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Globalization, some say, is a form of imperialism. Along with the supposed invasiveness of American culture—via Hollywood movies, McDonald hamburgers, and Coca Cola products—**globalization is seen by some as the equivalent of international aggression.**

A similar charge was made some years ago at a United Nations conference in Vienna; representatives of some nondemocratic nations complained that the idea of human rights was intrusive and imperialistic and thus threatened the sovereignty of their countries. Some serious political thinkers still object to the very notion of universal ethical and political principles, as if human beings as such didn't share some basic attributes that imply certain guidelines for how they should live.

To charge that globalization is imperialistic is like claiming that liberating slaves imposes a particular lifestyle on the former slaves. Globalization, in its principled application, frees trade. Barriers are removed and restraint on trade is abolished, both the opposite of any kind of imposed imperialism.

The idea that economic principles are culturally relative confuses highly variable human practices with ones that are uniform across all borders. The production and exchange of goods and services are universal. The political contingencies of various societies, born often of power, not reason, distort such universality by imposing arbitrary impediments. Slavery, the subjugation of women, and the prohibition of wealth transfer from parents to offspring are examples of conditions not natural to human life—rather they are artifacts of ideologies.

American intellectuals often fail to appreciate the country's goal of establishing a political ideal for human beings in general, not for blacks, whites, women, Catholics, or Muslims. This ideal, when exported, is the farthest thing from imperialism. It is, in fact, the closest we have ever come to bona fide human liberation (a term inappropriately adopted by Marxists who mean to impose a one-size-fits-all regime).

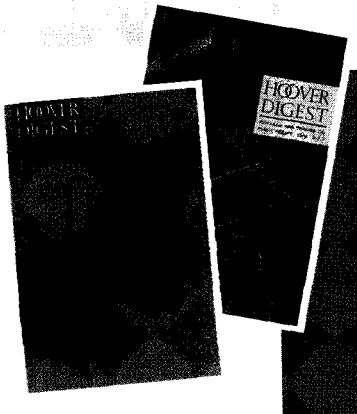
Globalization has thus not been effectively linked with what is at its heart, namely, human liberation. Because some schemes have been mislabeled as cases of "globalization," the genuine article has tended to acquire a bad reputation. But those are exceptions. To globalize has been to spread freedom, particularly in commerce but also in politics and civil life.

Genuine globalization should be supported not only because it is economically prudent but also because it is consistent with a basic human aspiration to be free. This is no threat to cultural diversity, religious pluralism, or the great variety of benign human differences with which globalization can happily coexist.

Only those who wish to impose their particular lifestyle on the rest of us would fear globalization and the spread of human freedom.

— Tibor R. Machan

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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Where We Stand

A commentary on public education and other critical issues

Focus on Reading

By SANDRA FELDMAN, President
American Federation of Teachers

Most people would agree that teaching children how to read is among the most important of our schools' many important missions. When children don't learn to read well, they generally can't do well in most other subjects, including math and science, and this effect worsens as they go through school. What is more, without reading, life loses a great deal of the joy and comfort and continual learning that books can give us.

The good news, as the recent Harry Potter phenomenon made clear, is that our youngsters—and our nation—enjoy reading. (I loved watching kids come out of the movie discussing whether it was true enough to the book.) Contrary to popular belief, international comparisons put the reading of U.S. students on a par with the reading performance of students in many other industrialized nations. And even in our lowest-performing schools, reading achievement is rising. Yet, a lot of new research shows we can do better, and we have to keep working at it, particularly with respect to the lowest-performing readers.

Certainly, poor students account for a large share of struggling readers—and to close the current education gap we have to ensure that our most vulnerable students learn to read early and well. Yet wealth is no guarantee of success; reading difficulty extends across all income levels—and with the proper instruction and support, the vast majority of students can learn to read well by the third grade.

Equipping our teachers

This means, first and foremost, making sure our teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skill they need to be good reading teachers.

There has been an emerging research consensus about how to teach reading effectively. In 1995, the AFT devoted an issue of its quarterly education journal, *American Educator*, to this subject. Since then, the AFT has created professional development programs on beginning reading instruction based on this research. It has also published a model reading instruction curriculum for teacher education and training ("Teaching Reading Is Rocket Science"), made information about research-based programs and practices available to teachers, and worked with other education and public policy organizations to translate this research into practical classroom strategies to improve student performance.

One piece of the recently enacted "No Child Left Behind" Act, which builds on legislation signed into law in 1998, gives a boost to improving the teaching of reading. Now called Reading First, the law extends the reach of federal reading initiatives and triples previous funding levels. Another piece, Early Reading First, also provides funds to develop language and pre-literacy skills of preschool students, ensuring that they begin school ready to read.

It is still unclear how much money from this new law will go to improve the preparation of prospective teachers, to ensuring that existing teachers have access to research-based professional development, and to upgrading the quality of student and classroom materials. But, if used well, this funding could make an enormous difference.

Teaching reading is rocket science and teachers need support.

Even experienced teachers need and welcome access to new, research-based information about effective reading instruction. A teacher-training program started by the AFT three years ago with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education offers a case in point. In three urban districts, Cleveland, New Orleans, and Washington, D.C., teams of teachers and school officials selected struggling schools where kindergarten through second-grade teachers would receive extensive training in effective reading instruction.

Reading experts and master reading teachers demonstrated age-appropriate methods for the systematic teaching of phonemic awareness and phonics, how to incorporate reading comprehension strategies into regular classroom discussions, and how storybooks and other literacy materials can be used to build vocabulary and background knowledge. Master teachers provided classroom teachers with in-class coaching and advice.

The "missing piece"

This kind of support made a real difference for teachers. As one experienced first-grade teacher in New Orleans commented, this program provided "the missing piece" that helped her reach those students she never could.

Last summer, First Lady Laura Bush emphasized the need for early reading success at a White House conference on early childhood education. She also noted the historic gap between education research and classroom practice. The First Lady, who taught second grade before becoming a school librarian, admitted that "I had instruction in teaching reading, of course, but in practice, I didn't really know how to teach a classroom of students to read." As a former first-grade teacher, I know just how she felt.

Just as doctors and other health professionals need to learn continuously about new developments in the field so that the treatment of their patients will be the best they can offer, so too do teachers and other educators need to have access to new methods that work in teaching reading. With this kind of support, teachers can help more of our children enter magical worlds like Harry Potter's, and allow them to imagine wonders and possibilities they wouldn't otherwise contemplate. ▮

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